

THE
MYSTERY
OF
INIQUITY
Unvailed,

In a Discourse, wherein is
held forth the oppositi-
on of the Doctrine, Wor-
ship, and Practices of
the *Roman Church*,

To the Nature, Designs,
and Characters of the
Christian Faith.

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logy in the University of *Glasgow*.

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THE
LAW
OF
TINQUITY

Amended

In the District of Columbia, where it is
held forth the opportunity

of the District of Columbia, where it is
held forth the opportunity

To the District of Columbia, where it is
held forth the opportunity

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*H*E that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow, is an observation which holdeth true of no part of knowledge so much as of the knowledge of mankind; it is some relief to him who knows nothing of foreign wickedness, to hope there are other Nations wherein vertue is honoured, and Religion is in esteem, which allayes his regrates, when he sees vice and impiety abound in his Countrey, but if by travelling or reading, he enlarge his Horizon, and know mankind better, his regrates will grow, when he finds the whole world

lyes in wickedness. It argues a cruel
 and inhumane temper, to delight in
 beholding scenes of horreur and mi-
 sery : and certainly, none who either
 honours his Maker and Redeemer, or
 is a lover of mankind, can without wi-
 derrow look on, and see the indigni-
 ties done to God and his Son Christ
 and see the enemy of the humane race
 triumphing over the world with such an
 absolute Authority, and so much en-
 raged cruelty : and that not only, in
 the dark Regions of it, which the Sun
 of Righteousness hath not yet visited
 with his Gospel, but that where
 Christ should have a Throne, Satans
 seat should also be ; is justly surpri-
 zing and astonishing. That almost
 all Christendom hath fallen from their
 first love, is what none whose eyes are
 open can deny ; and it is little less
 evident that the greater part of it
 hath made shipwrack, and erred from
 the faith ; and that the Church whose
 faith was once spoken of throug-
 hout the world, is now become the
 Mother of the fornications of the Earth. It is
 true, the Scriptures warned us of a
 falling

Iniquity unveiled.

falling away, of a mystery of iniquity,
of an *Antichrist* to be revealed in due
time, and of a *Babylonish Rome*, which
should bewitch the Earth with her Sor-
ceries, but should be varnished over
with fair colours and specious pre-
sences, so that mystery should be on
her fore-head: being then forewarn-
ed of so much danger to the Christi-
an Religion; it is a necessary (though
painful) enquiry to see if this *Anti-
christ* be yet come, or if we must look
for another.

But because some have stretched
the notion of Antichristianism so far,
that things harmless and innocent
come within its compass; and others
have so much contracted it, that they
with their abominations might scape
free; we are to take a view of the
essence and designs of the Christian
Religion, and to conclude from that
what must be Antichristianism: it be-
ing not only a bare contradiction to
some branches or parts of the Gospel
(for then every error or heresy were
Antichristianism) but a design and
entire complex, of such opinions and
practices,

practices, as are contradictory to, and
subversive of, the power and life of
Christianity: and if we find any such
thing to be broached and received in
the world, we may with the least ha-
zard of uncharitableness, pronounce it
to be Antichristianism, and if it be
acted or animated by any head, he
may be concluded Antichrist.

The designs of the Christian Reli-
gion run betwixt these four heads
The first is, to give us right appre-
hensions of the Nature and Attribute
of God; that we may conceive aright
of him, and adore him suitably to his
Nature, and according to his Will
and thereby be admitted to a free
converse with him, and become par-
takers of the Divine Nature. How
little of God was known by the twink-
lings of Natures Light, even to the
better and wiser part of the World,
Tullies Books of the Nature of the
Gods do sufficiently inform us? But
if the Philosophers were so much to
seek in it, what shall we expect from
the vulgar? And indeed *Homers Illi-
ads*, and *Ovids Metamorphosis*, were
wretched

and wretched Systems of Divinity : and yet such and such like were the sentiments of the Nations about the Godhead indeed. It is true, the seed of Abraham were delivered from that darkness, and knew God by his Name *Jebovab*, and had Laws and Ordinances he given them by God ; yet their worship was so carnal , and did so strike upon, and effect the senses, that we will be soon satisfied it was not so sublime and free as became the spirituality of the Divine Nature ; and so was only fitted for the infancy of the people of God, but by Christ the mystery that lay hid from ages and generations, was revealed : for he declared the Father, and revealed him, and taught us to renounce idols and vanities, and to serve the living God, commanding all men every where to repent, the times of ignorance wherein God winked at Idolatry, being then over. That so mankind being Gods offspring, might feel after him, and not worship him any more in the blinding grossness of Idolatry, but in a pure spiritual manner : and whereas the Law came by

Moses, by *Christ* came grace and truthence. Grace, in opposition to the severity kind of the Law; and truth, as opposed to carnality (not to falsehood) but to the figure, the shadows of *Moses* his Law: and therefore God is to be worshipped in spirit and truth, in opposition to the former carnal Ordinances, and Typical Rites, which shadowed out the truth in the Law.

The second branch of the Christian Religion is, to hold forth the method of mans reconciliation with his Maker. For the sense of all mankind agrees in this, that sin is an indignity done to God, which deserveth punishment, and cannot be expiated by any service man can do: It was therefore necessary there should be a means found for encouraging sinners to imbrace a religious life; of which all had reason to despair, without pardon were offered to penitents, upon the change of their lives. Now this was that, the Heathen could not dream how to procure: It is true the Jews had sacrifice for expiating of sin, but these could never quiet their consciences:

ences; since the common sense of mankind tells, that the blood of beasts cannot appease God. The mystery therefore of the reconciliation of sinners to God, is the proper character of the Christian Religion: which holds forth to us how the *eternal Word* was made man, and endured unspeakable sufferings for the sins of men, even to the death of the Cross: and thereupon was raised up by God, and carried up to Heaven, where he is vested with all power and authority, and by the merits of his death hath a right to grant pardon, give grace, and confer eternal life on all that believe on him; by whom God conveys all things to us, and through whom we are to offer up all our worship to God, he being the *Mediator betwixt God and man*.

The third head of the Christian Religion is, to teach the perfectest, clearest, and most divine rules, for advancing of the souls of men to the highest perfection of their natures. It is true: noble pieces of morality were acknowledged and taught by the Hea-

then Philosophers : and the Books of the Old Testament have the Doctrine of vertue, purity, humility and meekness laid open very fully : but without derogating from these, it must be acknowledged that as the Doctrine of Christianity, teacheth all these precepts with clearer rules, and fuller directions ; so they were in it recommended by the great example of its Author, backed with the strongest Motives, and enforced with the greatest Arguments. In these are the lessons of purity, chastity, ingenuity, humility, meekness, patience, and generosity so clearly laid down, and so fully evinced, that no man who is so much concerned, as to love these things where his mind may be improved, to all that is truly great and noble, but must be enamoured of the Christian Religion, and how soon he is taught it.

The fourth design of Religion is to unite mankind in the closest bonds of peace, friendship and charity, which it doth not only by the rules prescribed for the tempering our passions, forbidding of injuries, and loving our Enemies

emies, and by the Doctrine of obedience to those in authority over us, but likewise by associating us into one Body, called the Church, wherein we are to worship God jointly, and to be coupled in one by the use of the Sacraments, which are the Ligaments of the Body.

Having thus viewed the great designs of the Christian Religion in the several branches and parts thereof, I shall add to this, the main distinguishing Characters of our Religion, which are also four.

The first is, *its verity*: that it is not founded on the tales of Persons concerned, nor on the reveries of Doctards, nor received with a blind credulity, being founded on the authority of the great God, which appeared visibly in those that published it; chiefly in the person of *Jesus Christ*, who by his Miracles that were wrought in the sight of all the people, even his enemies looking on, and not being able to deny them; but chiefly by his resurrection from the dead, was declared to be the Son of God, which

which was seen and known by many
 who followed not cunningly devised
 fables, but were the eye-witnesses of
 his Majesty, who went in his Name, and
 published it to the World, confirming
 it by miracles and mighty won-
 ders, attesting it notwithstanding
 all the persecutions they met with
 and most of them confirming it with
 their blood: and this Doctrine was
 received and believed by the better
 part of mankind, though it being con-
 trary to all the interests of the flesh
 whose mortification it teacheth, its
 reception cannot be imputed to cre-
 dulity, or interest.

The second *Character* of our Re-
 ligion is, its genuine simplicity and
 perspicuity, that all its doctrines and
 rules are clearly and distinctly held
 out to us, not like the heathen Divi-
 nity, much whereof lay in dark oracles
 in the books of the Sybills, and in o-
 ther pretended *Mysteries*, which none
 but the Priests might handle and ex-
 pound. The *Jewish Religion* was also
 veiled with types and figures, so that
 it was not easie to see the substance

any and truth through all these foldings
and shadows; but the glory of the
Christian Religion, as to this particu-
lar, is nobly laid out by St. Paul, in
these words, 2 Cor. 3. 18. But we all
with open face, as in a glass, behold-
ing the glory of the Lord, are changed
into the same Image, from glory to
glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The third Character is, the reason-
ableness of the Christian Religion, its
containing none of these absurd in-
credible things which abounded a-
mong the Heathens, nor of these rites
of Judaism; the reasons whereof, be-
side the whole will of God in enjoyn-
ing them, could not be assigned; but
both the Doctrines and Precepts of
the Christian Religion are fitted for
all mankind, and so congenial to his Na-
ture, that they well deserve the de-
signation of *reasonable service*, or ra-
tional worship, God having made our
souls and them of a piece.

And the fourth Character of our Re-
ligion is, its easiness; Christs yoke is
easie, and his burden light, Mat. 11. 30.
Wherein we are freed from all the bar-
barous

barous and cruel rites of Gentilism, and from the oppressive bondage of Judaism, which was a Law of Ordinances, and a yoke that our fathers were not able to bear: but that we are called to by Christ, is so simple, so easy, and so plain, that well may we say his Commandments are not grievous. 1 Joh. 5. 3.

Having given this general hint of the design and characters of the Christian Religion, I hold it not necessary to dwell on a further deduction of those generals into more particular branches, nor to make this scheme of Religion good, by any longer proof of the Exposition I have laid down, being so obvious to the reason of every considering person; wherefore I go on to examine if there be any such system of doctrines, or opinions, among pretenders to Christianity, which tends to the overthrowing and enervating of this whole design, and whose characters are directly opposite to these I have mentioned; and the less avowed, and the more disguised that Society be, as it is more likely to prevail,

will prevail, since error and vice are not so formidable in their own colours, as when vailed with the pretences of truth and vertue, so it will better agree with that great character the Prophecies give of this defection, that it was a *Mystery*, and had *Mystery* on its forehead, Rev. 17, 15.

And here remains the sad part of my discourse, for whatsoever of mankind can with pleasure either satisfy his own reason, or convince the judgment of others, in a matter the issue whereof is to prove so great a part of the Christian Societies to be *Antichristian* and adulterar, and certainly if my love to truth, and the honour of my Redeemer and his Gospel, and by consequence a zeal for souls, did not engage me to this search, I could easily quite the Task, and chuse more easie and pleasant subjects for the exercise of my thoughts, but the wisdom of God having declared it a part of wisdom to observe the characters of the *Antichristian* beast, I therefore thought not without pain engage in the survey of it.

And

And first, in the entry it will be a bad Omen of no good to be expected from any society that shall study to keep her members in ignorance, and to barr them the study of the holy Scriptures, which being the Revelation of the whole counsel of God, and written by plain and simple men, and at first directed to the use of the rude illiterat vulgar, for teaching them the Mysteries of Godliness, and the path of life; it is a shrewd indication that if any study to hide this light under a Candlestick, and to keep it in an unknown Tongue, or forbid the Body of Christians the use of it (though its native tendancy be to enlighten the understanding, and enflame the will; it being given out by God for that end) that those must be conscious to themselves of great difformity to that rule, and apprehend, that if it were more known, their doctrine would be less believed, especially since the hardest part of the Scriptures are the writings of the Old Testament: and yet these were communicated to all of that dispensation,

who

be who were commanded by Christ to
search them, and who did educate their
Children in them, continuing that
care to a high degree, even to
this day. Now except it be said that
it is fitter all be kept under darkness
in the new dispensation, then was in
the old, no account can be given for
the zeal is used in any Church, to keep
their Children in such ignorance; and
yet this is a part of the distinguishing
characters of the new dispensation
from the old, that light hath appear-
ed in it. Now all may know how
guilty those of Rome are in this, what
pains are taken to detract from the
authority of the Scriptures? how
they quarrel? sometimes its dark-
ness, sometimes its ambiguousness,
sometimes the genuineness of its Ori-
ginals, and alwayes complain of its be-
ing too much perused, and therefore
let as little of it be put in *vulgar*
Tongues as can be; read it publick-
ly in an unknown Tongue, and allow
no privat person the use of it, with-
out allowance from his *Confessour*: of
which, though in some places the Re-
formation

formation hath made them more liberal, yet where there is no hazard of that, they betray their aversion from the Scriptures too palpably in all their Writings and Discourses.

But now to pursue my design more closely, I must call to mind the first branch of the Christian Religion, which teacheth how God is to be worshipped in a pure and spiritual way ; and see how far this is contradicted. And here I must consider the Idolatry of the Gentiles, which was of two kinds. The one was, when the true God was worshipped in a false manner : the other was, when divine adoration was offered to these who were not Gods. Of the first I shall reckon two kinds ; the first was, when an Image or Figure was erected for presenting the Deity to the senses, and adoration offered to God through it : in which case, though perhaps the heathens did formally worship the image, yet their *Philosophers* declared they meant these only for exciting the senses and imaginations, and not for being worshipped ; much less that the Deity should

should be conceived like unto them, as we find both in *Celsus Julian*, and *Maximus Tyrius*. Now this form of adoration is contrary both to the Divine Essence and Command. For God must either be conceived like such an Image, or not: if like to it, then a great indignity is done the Divine Nature; greater then if a Toad or Worm were hung out as the Image of a King, to have civil reverence payed to it; since he is of his own essence incomprehensible, and invisible, and so hath no shape nor figure. In a word, it abuses our thoughts of God, when we figure him to ourselves.

But if we conceive God not like such an Image; then why is it used, except to be a snare to the vulgar, who will be ready to think God like unto it? And certain it is, that whatever the more refined or abstracted wits may conceive of these Images, yet the vulgar offer up their adoration directly to them, and conceive God to be like unto them.

This worship is also contrary to the Divine Precept, who made it one of the

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the ten Commandments which him-
 self delivered to his people, *Exod. 20.*
that no graven image nor likeness should
be made to be worshipped. And the rea-
 son given, shews the Law was perpe-
 tual, for *God is ever jealous of the glo-*
ry due to him. Now what kindne-
 those of Rome have to this command-
 may be guessed by their striking
 out of their Catechisms, as if it were
 only an appendix of the first: but
 we read the whole Old Testament,
 will furnish us with large discoveries
 of Gods displeasure at this kind of
 worship, to which the Jews were so in-
 clinable; but *God would not give his praise*
to graven images, Isa. 42. 8. Now here
 it is to be remembred, that the Jewish
 dispensation was low and carnal, when
 compared to that to which we are cal-
 led: if then this worship was not al-
 lowed of to them, it is much less to
 be allowed of among Christians.

Another part of the false worship of
 the Heathens was, that they believed
 the Diety and divine power was by
 mystical and magical wayes affixed to
 some Bodies, as the Sun or Stars are,

to some Temples, and to some *An-*
alia and *Palladia*, which they believ-
ed came down from Heaven, *Acts*
9. 35. to which they held God to be
relent and adherent, and therefore
worshipped them. And of kin to this
as the Israelites their worshipping the
alf in the wilderness, *Exod. 32.* for
is clear they looked on it as their
God who had brought them out of
Egypt, therefore could not possibly
be adoring the Egyptian god that was
an Ox, but the feast that was to Je-
rovah, and the Psalm 106. vers. 20.
that sayes, they changed their glory
into the similitude of an Ox, do
show that they worshipped the true
God, though in a false manner. Nei-
ther is it to be imagined, that *Aaron*
the Prophet and Saint of the Lord,
though very guilty in this matter,
could for all that be so criminal, as
to make a false god. But the most
satisfying account of his fault was,
that when he saw God in the Mount,
Exod. 24. 10. God appeared in that
figure that was afterwards in the most
holy place, which was to be framed
after

after the pattern seen in the Mount
 And if so, then God appeared be-
 tween the Cherubims: now the fi-
 gure of a Cherub was the same with
 that of a Calf in its hinder part
 Ezek. 1. 7. And if we compare ver-
 10. of that Chap. with Ezek. 10. we
 what in the first place is called *the face*
of an Ox, is in the second called *the*
face of a Cherub which tells us clearly
 what was the figure of the Cherub
 And therefore Aaron seeing the people
 desired a sensible Symbol of God's
 presence among them, he made choice
 of that he had seen in the Mount
 about the Divine Glory, and yet
 that did not excuse his fault in the
 sight of God.

In like manner, after the Taber-
 nacle and Temple were set up, where
 in were the Cherubin, when Jerobo-
 am revolted, he set up Calves, 1 King
 12, 28, 29. as is probable upon the
 same account, but no doubt continu-
 ed in all points the worship of the
 true God, as it was at Jerusalem,
 might be proved from many particu-
 lars: but the sin wherewith he made
 Israel

Israel to sin, was the worshipping of the true God by a false Symbol. The account is to be given of the idolatry of Gideons Ephod, Judg. 8. 27. and of the worshipping the Brazen serpent, 2 King. 18. 4. where certainly the true God was adored; and yet the people went a-whoring from him in that worship.

And here the Title of *Whoredom*, given to Idolatry so often in the Old Testament, is to be considered: the importance whereof is, that God by his covenanting with his people, is married to them, to be their God: and the conjugal duty they owe him, is adoration. When therefore other creatures have any share of that bestowed on them, spiritual whoredom is committed.

Now how sad the application of this to the Christian Church must be, all may judge, who know how great a part of Christendom worships God by Images; and how the adored and incomprehensible Trinity is painted as an old man with a child in his arms, and a dove over the child's head.

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Though no man hath seen the Father at any time. Joh. 6. 46. and the Son of God can no more be represented by an Image, then the Father, and the Holy Ghost, though once appearing in the Symbolical representation of a Dove, cannot without idolatry be represented and worshipped under that figure. Neither can any apology be offered to this, which could not with the same reason have cleared both Jews and Gentiles of idolatry. And whatever more abstracted minds may think of these Images, yet none that considers the simplicity of the vulgar, the frailty of man, and his inclination to apprehend all things sensible, can doubt but that the rabble do really conceive of God, as like these figures, and do plainly worship them. It is further to be considered that though the Son of God was man, yet as man he is not to be worshipped: and therefore the setting out of Figures and Statues for his Humane Nature (which on the way are no real adumbrations, but only the fancies of Painters) and worship-
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being these as the Images of the Son of God, is no less Idolatry, then to worship the Father as an old man. And further, the worship of the bread-god, is idolatry, as evidently of any piece of *Gentilism* ever was. For if it be certain that Christ is not in the Hostie, then to adore him as he were, must be idolatrous. Neither will it serve for excuse, to say that Christ is truly worshipped as present: tried if he be not there, it is only a mistake about the presence, but no idolatry can be committed; the worship being offered to a proper object, who is God. But if this apology free them of idolatry, it will also clear those Heathens who worshipped some images or Creatures, in which they conceived God was present: so that they might have pleaded, it was the greatest and true God they adored, believing him there present, as their fathers had formerly believed. But were very gentle to idolaters, who upon such a plea, would clear themselves of that crime. What then is to be said of that Church, that holds it the

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greatest

greatest piece of her Religion, to adore the bread-god, with the same devotion they would pay to Christ, were he visibly present; who call the bread God, carry it about in Processions, and worship it with all the solemnity imaginable. And finally, the worship they give the Cross, is likewise an adoring of God under a Symbole and representation. And thus we have seen the parallel of *Rome-Heathen*, and *Rome-Christian*, runs but too too just.

But the next kind of the Heathen idolatry, was their worshipping of others beside God, whom they held of two ranks: Some that were so pure, that they never dwelt in Bodies. Others they judged to be the souls of deceased men, after their death acknowledged and honoured with divine honour. And this kind of idolatry was first begun at *Babylon*, where *Ninus* made the Statue of his Father *Belus* be set up, and worshipped it. And from him all these lesser gods were called *Belim*, or *Baalim*. Now concerning these, the Heathens believed that they were certain inter-

medial

medial powers, that went betwixt God and men, by whom all good things were conveyed to mortals, by whom also all our services were offered to the gods. Thus the Nations *had gods many, and lords many*, 1 Cor. 8. 5. And these lesser Deities or Demons they adored, by erecting Statues to them about their burial places, where they built Temples for them, and worshipped them. And from this hint of *Babylons* being the mother of this kind of idolatry, we may guess why the Apostacy of that City, which in *St. Johns* *dayes, did reign over the Kingdoms of the earth*, Rev. 17. 18. is shadowed forth under the name of *Babylon*; to hold out that the corruption it was to fall into, was to be of a kind with that begun in *Babylon*; and the character of the Whore doth likewise agree well with this.

Now if we compare with this the worship of Angels and Saints in the *Roman Church*, we shall find the parity just and exact. For after the conversion of the *Roman Empire*, it is not to be denied but that in order to

the gaining of the Heathen World to a compliance with Christianity, the Christians did as near as was possible comply with the Heathenish customs, and therefore in stead of their gods, they set up the *Demon* and *Bad-worship*, to the Apostles and other Saints and Martyrs; which *Theodore* doth most ingenuously acknowledge to have been set in the stead of their gods. They became afterwards so exact in the parallel, that as the Heathens had of these lesser gods for every Nation, so there was a Saint appointed for every Nation: *St. Andrew* for *Scotland*, *St. George* for *England*, *St. Patrick* for *Ireland*, and many more for other Nations: and as every house among the Heathens had their household god, so every person was taught to have a *tutelar Saint* and *Angel*. And as among the Heathen there were gods for all Trades, for all sicknesses, and for every vertue; so in Antichristianism there were Saints for every disease, for every profession, and for all the graces. And as the Heathen build Temples for them, so did also

Babylonish

Babylonish Rome. And here an odde remark is in my way of this conformity that the *Pantheon at Rome* dedicated in *Augustus his time* to *Cybele the mother of the gods, and to all the gods, was afterwards consecrated to the Virgin, and all the Saints.* And as the Heathens offered Prayers, made vows, observed days, brought presents, used Processions in honour to these lesser gods, and worshipped their Statues and Images : so all this by degrees crept into *Rome-Christian*, as might be branched out in more particulars then the nature of so short a discourse will allow of. It is true, the worship of Images came not in before the *eighth Century* ; but after that time it engaged all that received it into a high degree of madness, for advancing that Heathenish piece of worship. And shall I here tell what is known to all who have seen the forms of that Church ? how you shall find their Churches all over dressed up with Images and Statues, gorgeously apparelled, and well adorned ; where the poor vulgar are lying prostrat be-

fore them, saying their devotions and perhaps washing the feet of their Shrines with their tears, and with great affection kissing the hem of their Garments: and if through the tricks of the Priest, the Image seem to nod or smile on them, (which is not unfrequent) with what joy do they go away, as if some Angel had saluted them from Heaven. And here it were too long to reckon up the abominations of this Saint-worship which are offered to the *Virgin*, with the blasphemous Titles given her, and prayers made to her; as if she were more merciful and gentle to sinners, than her blessed Son. What shall I tell of the whole Psalms turned to her? The words of Goddess, and Lady, being put in the place of God, and Lord: and that from the eleventh Century, in which the form of the numbering their Prayers by Beads was begun, ten Go to the *Virgin*, for one to God. How many more worship her, then do her Son? How many more Churches are built to her, then to her Son? And how many *Pilgrimages* are made to her Shrines

Shrines and Reliques? And thus I think little doubting will remain, that the worship of the *Baalim* begun at *Babylon*, is now set up in the Christian *Rome*.

Now how contrary this is to the Divine Nature, common reason may suggest? as also to the exaltation of the Person of Christ, *Ijai. 42. 8.* God is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another. We have but one Lord *Jesus Christ*, *1 Cor. 8. 6.* who by his most precious blood shed for us, purchased the honour of being Mediatour betwixt God and Man: and therefore Christians ought only to make mention of his Name. Beside the great evil of Idolatry is, that it debases the soul of the profane worshiper, for like them are all they that trust in them, *Psal. 115. 8.* it leads away the mind from that inward free and spiritual converse, and fellowship with God, to which the Gospel invites us; and carries it out into an external, sensible, and dead Religion: it stifles the power of true piety, making it die out into formal

and stupifying superstition: and the plagues which Heaven poures out on those ungodly worshippers, are heavy, and great. A black Roll of them in the end of the first Chap. to the Romans, which were the Consecratories on their not glorifying of God, as God, which is branched out into the two kinds I have discoursed of. The first is, ver. 23. *they changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible man, &c.* And the second is, ver. 25. *Who worshipped and served the Creature more then (or besides) the Creator.* And it would raise horror in sober minds to tell how much the sin of the flesh, particularly the sin of Sodom, which is first reckoned in that dismal Catalogue, abounds with these of this spiritual Babylon.

And will the poor distinctions of *Dulia* and *Latria* save them from this guilt? Alas, these are parts of the Mystery, by which they would veil their abominations: but their nakedness is not hid with this thin veil. For we see how simply, all religious worship offered to Creatures, displeased

sed God: neither did the Prophets tell the Israelites that a kind of worship called *Dulia*, or *service*, might be payed to Creatures, but the *Latria*, or *Adoration* was only proper to God; indeed they dreamed not of this subtilty; and when St. John offered to fall down before the Angel, he forewarnes him not to do it, as being not only his fellow-creature, but his fellow servant, Revel. 19. 10. by which all that Prostration for worship is declared unlawful, and what can be called adoration, is to offer prayers, to make vows, to sing Hymns, to observe dayes, and to build Churches, be not such. These nice distinctions which the Schoolmen have devised, will serve in no stead in the great day, when Gods jealousie shall burn like fire against all that have dishonoured him, by this profane worshipping of Creatures. And it is certain, that however some speculative people may have distinct notions of these kinds of worship, yet the vulgar, in their practice, make no difference at all; but place all their trust in them, fly to them,

in their troubles, as to their refuge and strong hold : whereby that faith and confidence which is only due to God and his Son, is abated ; so much of it being bestowed on Creatures. And what a baleness of mind doth it discover, for men to whom God hath revealed so much of the riches of his grace, and hath allowed constant and free access to his Throne, with the greatest encouragements and assurances of being heard and accepted by him : and who hath given mankind a Mediator, who in the likeness of our flesh, did express the greatest and freest love imaginable, dying for us, and being now our Advocate and Intercessour with his Father, that instead of conversing immediatly with God and Christ in these sweet exercises of devotion ; we should betake ourselves to a dead and lifeless invoking of those, of whose hearing we can have no assurance, and in which there can be no comfort nor true joy found.

So much of the Object of Worship the manner of it is next to be considered.

sidered: we observed before that God called us in the Gospel to a lively and spiritual worship; & this was first in opposition to the sorceries of the Gentile worship, and next to the heavy yoke of the Jewish bondage. How much of sorcery and enchantments was used in Heathenism, every one that gives account of their forms, do mention: but indeed all they used was nothing, if compared to the enchantments of the Roman Church; and first of all, can any thing look liker a charm, then the worshipping God in an unknown tongue? in which the worshipper is capable of no converse with God, by these parts of worship which he doth not understand. Next, the muttering so large portions of the worship, chiefly in the office of the Mass, what doth it look like but the mumbling of charms? But shall I here tell of the *charming of water, of salt, of wax-candles, for driving away of devils?* Shall I next tell of the *christning of bells, the hallowing of oyl, the touching of beads, the touching of little pebbles;* which shall have a vertue against sickness;

ness of all kinds, thunders and lightnings and tentations of the Devil, shall I next tell of the consecrating of *Roses, Agnus Dei's, Medals*, and the like? or shall I tell of their *exorcismes* and charms for driving out devils, with all the strange actions used in them? shall I mention the Reliques, and all the vertues believed to be in them, yea and derived from them? shall I mention their priviledged *Altars*, their *Jubelees*, the prayers upon which *Indulgences* are granted, their solemn *Processions*, together with all the small tricks are used in every part of their worship? all this should be endless: but these things cannot but eat out the power of Religion, and introduce a dull and empty *skellet* of enchanted actions, in stead of that lively Image of God, which the Christian Religion designs to restore in us.

In a word, shall I tell how the Sacramental actions are polluted by the supersaturation of so many new rites, whereby they are wholly changed from their original simplicity. In Baptism,

instead

instead of washing with Water in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; how have they added so many adulterated rites? the child must be thrice blown upon, then a charm used for turning the Devil out of him, he must be anointed with holy oyl, and hallowed salt must be put in his mouth, sanctified garments also must be put on him, and a holy wax-candle in his hand, and the Priests blessed spittle must be gently stroaked upon him. Whether doth all this look like the simplicity of the Spouse of Christ, or the attire of the harlot? And in the other Sacrament, a great deal more adoe is made, so that any indifferent spectator, who were not warned of it, would swear it were a solemn peice of pageantry, the Priest must come in cloathed with rich embroidered Vestments, then he goes to the Altar, sometimes reads on the one side, then he turns to the other; Often he bowes, and kisses, and crosses, sometimes single, sometimes thrice repeated crosses: most of the Office he mutters, though what he sayes is all

all alike understood, being in an unknown tongue: sometimes he turns to the People, and gives them a short Barbarian benediction: then he goes on till he come to the five wonder-working words: And then in stead of the bread, which the force of these words hath driven to nothing, behold a god, to be worshipped by the poor deluded spectators. And after the adoration, the god is to be devoured by the Priest, which made the *Arabian* say, *he never saw a sect of Religion so foolish as the Christians were, who with their teeth devoured the god they had adored.* Certainly all this looks so like a piece of extravagance, especially if the simplicity of the first institution be considered; that many will doubt if it be possible that such worship can be received in any corner of the Christian World. And by these hints, though a hundred more could be instanced, let it be guessed what is become of the simplicity of the Christian Religion; when it is so vitiated in all the parts and branches of it: and whether that genuine sincere spirituality

rituality appear in it, which the Gospel holds forth to the world : these things having a native tendency for leading away the soul from attending upon God, in her acts of worship ; which is the only thing for which external worship is to be continued in, that in it we may jointly concur to converse with our Maker. If from this I should reckon up all the tricks are used in secreter worship, what stories should I tell of the pattering over the beads, of the multiplying little unintelligible prayers, the using of penances, some whereof are ridiculous for their gentleness, and others of them are as formidable for their horror, and fitter for *the priests of Baal*, or the *worshippers of Diana Taurica*, then for these that worship the living God with joy and gladdeness of heart ? Now by the performance of these, the simple deluded people imagine themselves reconciled to God, and secured from his wrath : And so go about them meerly in the opinion of a charm.

But I must next shew how the multiplicity of the Jewish rites was also brought

brought in upon Christendom, though Christ came to set us at liberty from that Pedagogy, which was made up of ordinances and lifeless precepts, that could not make the doer thereof perfect, nothing being enjoined in the Christian Religion, but that which was of it self easie and proper for the great design of purifying our souls. Now such as have brought in a yoke of ordinances, that have no tendency to the cleansing of our souls, but oppress us with their tyrannical burdensomness, being both heavy, and numerous, must be looked on as the introducers of a new Judaism, for oppressing the Christian world, but what a heap of new superadded forms have the high Priests of Rome brought upon these who stoop to their tyranny? And how much sanctity do they place in them; enjoying severer censures on the violation of these, then on the greatest transgressions against either the Moral or Positive Laws of God? how many holy dayes have they instituted? how much distinction of meats, of fasting, and abstinence? and how like are their
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ubilees and Pilgrimages to the Jubi-
lees and yearly trotting up to Jerusa-
lem, which was among the Jews? In a
word, there is not a piece of worship
about which there is not a greater ap-
pendage of vain pompous, and withall
burdensom ceremonies, then were a-
mong the Jews. Shall I here mention
the five superadded Sacraments, to
the two instituted by Christ, with
all the baggage of rites belonging
to each of them, or recount all the
rites in their multifarious ordinati-
ons? shall I tell of the laying up the
bodies when dead, and of the forms of
their burials? the burning of Lamps
in the clearest day, together with the
incense that perfumes the worship,
which are clear pieces of antiquated
Judaism. In a word, no part of the pa-
rallel holds more exactly, then that
they are zealous of the traditions of
their Fathers, whereby the Commend-
ments of God are made of none effect;
and that they honour God with their
lips, when their hearts are far from him:
and worship him in vain, teaching for
doctrines

doctrines the commandments of men
 Matth. 15. 8, 9.

And hitherto I have discoursed
 on the first limb of Antichristianism
 and have discovered too evident in-
 dications of the contradiction is in
 to the first branch of the design
 Christianity; whereby the worship
 God is partly adulterat, and partly
 smothered by a heavy and trouble-
 some load of useless and lifeless per-
 formances; which must needs lead
 out the soul from an inward at-
 tending on God, or free converse with
 him.

The second branch of Christianity
 is, the holding forth that mysterious
 contrivance of the wisdom and good-
 ness of God, for reconciling the world
 to himself, by his dear Son; whom
 he gave to the death for us, and af-
 ter raised up, making him both Lord, and
 Christ: whose glory and dignity
 vulgarly branched out in these
 three Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.
 By the first of which, he revealed the
 Father, and his whole council to man-
 kind, in plain and simple discourses
 afterward

Afterwards committed to writing by the faithful eye and ear-witnesses of his Majesty. His Prophetick office therefore is chiefly acknowledged, in our grateful receiving these discoveries, and our studying to adjust both our faith and practice to that unerring rule. But can any thing be more contradictory to this, then to keep up the knowledge of these writings from Christians, to accuse their darkness and defects, and to apprehend great danger from their diligent perusal, to vivify that sacred study, preferring the same and lifeless discourses of men, to the words of eternal wisdom? For we must consider, that our study of the Gospel, is of the same nature with a personal following of Christ, when on earth, to see his miracles, and hear his doctrine, the same is also to be said of the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles. Now to bar the vulgar from this, is to hinder them to hear and see Christ and his Apostles, as if that were a priviledge restricted to Church-men. What shall be then said of these, who call the Scriptures a nose of

of wax, the source of all heresies, a book written not on design, but upon particular emergents? and do assert its incompleatness, unlesse made up by the traditions of the Church. Is not this to add to the words of that book, and to accuse the faithful witness of unfaithfulness? but worse then this, is held by these who will have all the authority of the Scriptures to depend on the Church, which must be believed in the first place.

But here a great difference is to be made betwixt the testimony of a *Witness*, and the authority of a *Judge*: the former is not denied to the Church. And so the Jews had the Oracles of God committed to them, but that doth not prove the authority of their *Sanhedrim* infallible, or superiour to Scripture: and in this case more cannot be ascribed to the Christian Church, then was proper to the Jewish in our Saviours time. But further, if the Scripture be to be believed, on the testimony of the Church, then upon what account is the Church first believed? it cannot be said, be-
cause it is the source of all heresies, a book written not on design, but upon particular emergents? and do assert its incompleatness, unlesse made up by the traditions of the Church. Is not this to add to the words of that book, and to accuse the faithful witness of unfaithfulness? but worse then this, is held by these who will have all the authority of the Scriptures to depend on the Church, which must be believed in the first place.

ause of any testimony in Scripture; for
it give authority to the Scriptures,
it cannot receive its authority from
their testimony. How then shall it be
proved that the Church must be be-
lieved? or must it be taken from their
own word? and yet no other reason
can be given to prove the Church in-
fallible. For to say that they have
continued in succession of Bishops from
the Apostles dayes, concludes nothing,
unless it be first proved that the Do-
ctrine of the Apostles was of God:
otherwise the *Mahometan* Religion is
as much to be believed; since for
many ages a succession of Priests have
believed it. Further, the Greek
Churches drive up the series of their
Bishops to the Apostles dayes, as well
as the Roman, -why then should not
their authority be likewise acknow-
ledged infallible? In fine, must the
vulgar go and examine the successions
of the Bishops, and judge about all
the dubious elections, whether the
conveyance have been interrupted or
not? certainly were this to be done,
it were an impossible atchievement,
an

and harder than the study of the Originals of both Testaments. Therefore the vulgar must simply believe the authority of the Church on her own testimony, which is the most absurd thing imaginable, and this to every individual, will resolve into the testimony of their Priest. Behold then a goodly foundation for building our faith upon.

Christ's Prophetick Office is also invaded, by the pretence of the Church's infallibility in expounding Scripture; for if this be granted, the whole Authority will be devolved on the Church; for by this Doctrine, she may teach what she will, and were the Scripture evidence never so full to the contrary, yet whatever wrested exposition she offer, though visibly contrary to the plain meaning of the words, must be believed. But with whom this Power and Authority is lodged, is not agreed to among themselves; some yielding it to the High Priest of the Church, when in his Chair, others to the great Sanhedrim of Christendom in a General Council, others

Others to both jointly ; but all this asserted without proof : for that Christ, of telling the Church, Mat. 17. so often repeated by them, is absent of particular offences : and so restricted to the case of differences among brethren, and relates not to her points of Doctrine. Besides, the context of these words doth clearly shew them applicable to every Parochial-Church ; and yet their infallibility cannot be asserted. So it is clear that Christ doth only speak of a jurisdiction for quieting of differences among the Brethren.

That of the gates of hell their not prevailing against the Church, Mat. 16. proves not the pretence of infallibility. And indeed the translation of that place deserves amendment, instead of *hell*, that word is to be rendered *grave* ; So that the meaning of the Phrase is, death (which is the mouth and gate through which we passe into the Grave, and is so used by Greek Writers) shall never prevail against the Church ; that is, the Church shall never die.

Neither

Neither will that of the Spirit truth leading out into all truth, Joh. 13. advance the Cause a whit, since that promise relates to all believers and it is a part of the happiness of the new Dispensation, that all men shall be taught of God. And the promise of founding the Church on St. Peter, Matth. 16. saith as little; for I suppose the Rock on whom the Church were to be built, were Peter himself, which I shall not much contravert, that is not peculiar unto him; since we are all built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, and on the twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem are written the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb; but what will that prove for a series of the Bishops of Rome?

And finally, for the keyes of the kingdom of heaven, Mat. 16. 19. these being given to Peter, that saith no more, but that he was to open the Gospel, which is usually called, the kingdom of God or of heaven in the New Testament. Now the use of the keyes being to open the door, this was is

eculiarly *St. Peters* honour, who did
first publish the Gospel both to Jews
and Gentiles, and in particular did
first receive the Gentiles into the
new Dispensation. But this hath no
relation to the Bishops of *Rome*, nor
to the pretended infallibility of that
see.

That which hath the fairest appear-
ance of reason is, that if there be no
absolute unerring Court on earth, for
deciding of controversies, there shall
be no end of them ; but every privat
man may upon the pretence of some
evil understood place of Scripture,
break the unity of the Church, and
the peace of the Church is in ha-
zard of being irrecoverably lost : but
how specious soever this may appear,
it hath no weight in it : for it is cer-
tain that vice, as well as error, is de-
structive of Religion, and it will be
an imputation on our Religion, that
we be no more guarded against,
when the other is, if then there be no
authority for repressing vice, but
the outward discipline of the Church;
it is not incongruous there be no

other authority for suppressing of
 your, but that same of the Discipline
 of the Church. It is certainly, a piece
 of humility, for a man to suspect his
 own thoughts, when they ly cross
 the sentiments of the guides and
 leaders of the Church; but without
 a man ought to be in all he does, *freely*
persuaded in his own mind, and we
 are commanded to try the spirits, and
 not to believe every spirit, 1. John 4.
 Now reason being the chief excellence
 of man, and that wherein the Divine
 Image doth mainly consist, it were
 very absurd to deny man a rational
 judging and discerning of these things
 wherein his eternal interest is more
 concerned. Besides the nature of Religion,
 it being a thing suitable to the
 powers of the soul, shews that
 man must have a conviction of the
 truth of it on his mind, and that he
 cannot be bound in contradiction to
 his own apprehensions, to receive
 opinions meerly upon the testimony
 of others.

If to confirm all this, I should add
 all can be brought from History for
 proving

proving General Councils to have
erred in matters of Faith; or that
Popes have been Hereticks, or that
they have been anathematized as such,
by other Popes and General Councils,
should be too tedious. But in end,
how shall the vulgar know the defini-
tions of Councils, or the Decrees of
Popes? Or must they be blindly de-
termined by the Priests assertion?
Certainly, this were to expose them
to the greatest hazards, since they are
not suffered to found their faith upon
the Scriptures: nor doth the Church
reveal her Doctrines to them, so that
their faith must be resolved upon the
bare testimony of a Priest, who is per-
haps both ignorant and licentious.
And by this we may judge to what
passe the souls of the people are
brought by this Doctrine. In a word,
we are not the servants of men, nor
bound to their Authority; for none
can be a Judge, but where he hath po-
wer both to try & to coerce: now none
but God can either search our hearts,
or change them; for as no humane
power can know our thoughts, so nei-

that can it turn them, which are not in our own power, much lesse in the power of others; therefore our Consciences can, and must only fall within Gods jurisdiction: and since the renovation of the Image of God consists in knowledge, and Religion designs an inward union of our souls to divine Truth, that we may freely converse with it, it will follow, that all these pretences of absolute authority and infallibility in teaching, are contrary to Christs Prophetick Office, who came to reveal the Father to us.

The second of Jesus Christs Offices, was the Priestly, without which the former had never been effectual; for had we known never so perfectly the will of God, without a method had been laid down for reconciling sinners to him, it was in vain to think of Religion, since nothing sinners could do, was able to appease God, or expiate sin; but this was fully done by the Sacrifice of that Lamb of God, *Who became sin for us, and bare our sins on his own body, In whom we have redemption,*

tion, even forgiveness of sin through his blood; 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Eph. 1. 7. If then any have derogated from the value of this satisfaction, they have offered the outmost indignity to the highest love; and committed the crime of the greatest ingratitude imaginable; who would requite the most inconceivable love, with such a sacrilegious attempt; but, how guilty are they of this, who would set the merits and works of men, in an equality with the blood of God? as if by these, we were justified, or owed our title to glory, to our own performances; whereas we are taught by the oracles of God, that by grace we are saved, that God only hath made the difference betwixt us and others, and that he hath freely chosen us in his Son Christ Jesus, Eph. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 4. 7. And alas! what are we, or what is all we do, that it can pretend to the lowest degree of Gods acceptance, without he freely, both help us in it, and accept of us for it? so that when he rewards us for our services with eternal life, he freely crowns his own free gifts to

us. For when we consider how great a disproportion there is betwixt our best services and eternal glory, when we also remember how all our good actions flow from the Principles of Divine Grace freely given, but with-
all, reflect on the great defects and imperfections that hang about our best performances, we will not be able to entertain any thoughts of our meriting ought at the hands of God. And certainly, the deeper impressions we have either of the evil of sin, or the goodness of God; we will be further from a capacity of swelling big in our own thoughts, or of claiming to say thing on the pretensions of justice or debt. It is true, this doctrine of *Merit* is so explained by some of that Church, that there remains no ground of quarrelling it; except for the Terms sake, which is indeed odious and improper (though early used by the Ancients in an innocent sense.) But many of that Church acknowledge, there can be no obligation on God by our Works, but that which his own promise binds upon him;

him ; which none, who believe the truth of the promises of the Gospel, can question ; but still we must remember that we owe all to the love of Jesus, and nothing to our selves : which as it is the matter of the Allelujahs of glorified Saints, so should be the subject of our dayly acknowledgments ;] wherefore, we must abominate every thing that may seem to detract from this. But alas ! were all this zeal, many of that communion own for merits and good works, meant for the advancing a holy and spiritual life, it would carry a good apology with it : and its noble design would very much qualify the severity of its censure ; but when these good works, which for so many ages were highly magnified, were the building of Churches, the enriching of Abbeyes, Pilgrimages, and other trifling and voluntary peeces of Will-worship, advanced for the Secular interests of the Church ; what shall be said of all that pains was used by the Monks for advancing them ; but that they were willing to sell the value of the blood

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and.

and merits of Christ, for advancing their own secular interests, and devilish practices? Alas! how far are these from that holiness and sanctity, which must qualify us for the Kingdom of God, and the inheritance of the Saints. And to end this matter, let me add one thing, which is most evident to all who have observed the methods of the directours of Consciences in that Church, that with whatever distinctions this matter be varnished over among them; yet the vulgar do really imagine they buy and sell with Almighty God, by their undergoing these Laws of the Church, and penances imposed by their Confessour: which as it nourisheth the life of pride and self-love, so it detracts from the value they ought to set on the blood of Christ, as their only title to heaven and glory.

And to this, I must add that distinction of the *temporary and eternal punishments* sin deserves: the latter whereof they acknowledge are removed by the blood of Christ; but the former must be expiated by our selves; either

either by sufferings in this life, or these we must endure in Purgatory; unless by the Popes charity we be secured or delivered from them. Now, how contrary this is to the value we are taught to set on the blood of Christ, all may judge. Eph. 2. 15, 16. By Christ peace is made, we are reconciled to God, he presents us to the Father without spot and wrinkle. And much more of this nature meeting us in Scripture, declares how plenary his satisfaction was; nothing being left undone by him, for removing the guilt and demerit of sin. And what comfortless doctrine this is, we may soon apprehend, how it takes away that joy in God, at the approaches of death: Since there is such a hazard of direful miseries following. Now, this was no small part of the mystery, by which the world was brought under their dominion: and therefore great pains was taken for rooting the belief of it deep in all mens hearts, many visions and apparitions were vouched for its proof; and all the lives of the Saints that were written for divers ages,

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were

were full of such fabulous narrations, some souls were said to be seen standing in burning brimstone to the knees, some to the middle, some to the chin, others swimming in *Caldrons of melted Metal*, and devils pouring the metal down their throats, with many such affrighting Stories.

But for all this, the proof from Scripture was only drawn from one wrested place of the Apostle Paul, *1 Cor. 3. 12, 13, 14, 15.* who saith, *That in the day of the Lord, such as built upon the foundation of Christ, superstructures of wood, hay and stubble, should be saved, because they kept the foundation, yet so as by fire.* But this was only a proverbial form of speech, to expresse the risque they run to be such, as of one that escapes out of a fire, such proverbial speeches being usual in Scripture, as that of the Prophet, *Zach. 3. 2.* *Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* Or of the Apostle, *Jude 23.* *Some save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* But any one will at first view, see how slender a foundation this was for the superstructure built upon it.

But

But the way was contrived for preserving souls from, or rescuing them out of Purgatory, will discover what were the inducements for advancing the belief of it with such zeal, which was thus framed: It is believed by that Church, that beside the Commands that necessarily oblige all Christians, there are many counsels in the Gospel, in order to the attaining a higher pitch of perfection; such as the counsels of poverty, and chastity, or the like; and they teach, that such as did not obey these, cannot be said to have sinned; but on the other hand, these who have obeyed them, shall not want a reward, by their so *supererogating*, beyond what was strictly bound upon them; and the reward of them is their meriting both for themselves, and others, an exemption from the pains of Purgatory. And of all these merits, there is a *common treasure of the Church*, wherein for good manners sake, the merits of Christ is the chief Stock; and this is committed to the Successors of S. Peter, to whom the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Heaven are believed to be given, who can communicate of that spiritual Treasure as they will ; either for preserving Souls from Purgatory, or for delivering them out of it. This could not but work wonders for the exaltation of the Papal dignity, when he was conceited to be honoured of God with so high a trust. This was also made an engine for advancing all the Papal designs; for upon any quarrel he had with any Prince, the Popes proclaimed a *croisade* , promising exemption from Purgatory, to all who hazarded their lives for the service of the holy Church. And the contrivance of Purgatory being universally believed, this could not fail to draw great numbers about his Standarts. And by this means he brought most Princes into that servile subjection to him, under which they groaned for many Ages. Another practice yet more base and sordid was, the selling of Indulgences and pardons for money; certainly here was *Simons Crime* committed by the pretended Successors of him, who had of old accused him,

him, that thought the gift of God might be purchased with money, and thereupon did cast him out of the Church. It were endless to tell the base Arts, and blasphemous discourses, of the Monks who were sent through the World, to sell these Indulgences, which in end proved fatal to that Church, since the excessive magnifying of them did first provoke *Luther* to examine their corruptions. It is true, they will not hear of the harsh word of *selling Indulgences*, but disguise it with their giving them to such as will offer Almes to the Church; but really this whole Contrivance is so base, so carnal, and so unlike the Spirit of Christianity, that to repeat it, is to refute it: here was a brave device for enriching the Church, when the making great Dotations to it, were judged so effectual for delivering out of Purgatory. Who would not out of love to his friends soul, if he believed him frying in these flames, give liberally of his Goods, but much rather would a man give all that he had for his own security, especially, when on his death-bed

bed he were beset with such *Leeches*, who were confounding him with dismal apprehensions, and thus trafficking with him, *for the exchange of the soul*. Hence sprung the enriching of Abbeyes, and Churches, for every order hath the merits of their order, which they can communicat to one of their fraternity: if then a dying man had gained their favour so much, that he was received into their Order, and died wrapped in one of their Frocks, then was his soul secure from the *grim Tormentors* below. And what an endless heap of fables had they of souls being on the brink, or in the midst of the flames, and of a sudden snatched out.

But now all this Trade hath quite failed them; therefore Indulgences are fallen in their rates, and in stead of them, there are Prayers to be used, and especially to be said before *privileged Altars*, or at such times, or before such reliques, that it is no hard work for any among them to ransom the souls of others, or to preserve their own. In a word, doth not all this debase

debase the spirit of true Religion, and expose it to the jealousy of Atheists, as if it were a contrivance for advancing base, and secular designs. And doth it not eat out the sense of true Piety, when the Vulgar see the Guides of Souls making such shameful Merchandise of them, and doing it with such respect of Persons, that if a man be rich enough, he is secure; whereby our Lords blessing of the poor, and passing a woe on the rich, is reversed. But above all, what indignity is by this done to the blood of the Son of God? And how are the people carried from their dependance on him, and their value of his sufferings, by these practices.

Another Art not very remote from this, for detracting from the value of Christs death, and the confidence we should have in it, is, the Priestly Absolution, wherein after the sinner hath gone over his sins without any sign of remorse, and told them to the Priest, he enjoins a penance, the doing whereof, is called a *satisfaction*: and the vulgar do really imagine, that the
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undergoing the penance, doth fully
serve for appeasing Gods wrath against
sin. But how soon the Priest hath
enjoined his penance, without wait-
ing that they obey it ; he layes his
hand on their head, and sayes, *I absolve*
thee : and after this, they judge them-
selves fully cleansed of sin, and that
they may receive the Sacrament, had
their former life been never so bad. It
is true, the practice of the Priests in
their slight penances, and hasted abso-
lutions, and promiscuous allowing
of all the holy Sacrament, is very
much condemned, by many in that
Church; who complain of these abuses
with much honest zeal : but these
complaints are so little regarded, that
their writings are condemned, and the
corruption continues unreformed. Now
what can take off more from the value
of the death of Christ, then to believe
it in the power of a Priest to absolve
from sin ? All the power of the Church
being either Ministerially to declare
the absolution offered in the Gospel,
upon the conditions in it, or to ab-
solve from the scandal which any pub-
lick

such trespass hath given. It was counted blasphemy in Christ, when he said, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*, Mar. 2. 5, 10. of which he cleared himself, *from the power was committed to the Son of Man on earth, to forgive sins*: which shews it to be blasphemy in all others to pretend to absolve from sin, it being an invasion of his prerogative.

To this I might add the scorn put on Religion by many of the penances enjoined for sin, such as the abstaining from flesh for so many dayes, the pattering over so many prayers, the repeating the *penitential Psalms*, the going to such Churches, and such Altars, with other ridiculous observances like these, which cannot but kill the vitals of true Religion, and lead away souls from these earnest applications to Jesus Christ for pardon and renovation. And who can have any sad apprehensions of sin, who is taught such an easie way of escaping punishment?

I confess in this, as in all other parts of Religion, the Masters of that Church have so contrived things,
that

that their Doctrines might according to the fable of the Manna, taste pleasant to every mans relish : for if any be grave and melancholy, then silence, solitude, and retirement are enjoyned them; if their tempers be more fiery, and sullen, severe corporal mortifications and disciplines are tasked on them, such as cruel, and perhaps publick whipping, or other unspeakable austerities, with which the lives of the modern Saints are full : but if one be of a more jolly temper, who desires Heaven at an easier rate, then so metrifling penance shal serve turn. These are a few of their Arts for diverting souls, from flying unto Jesus, as to the sure and safe refuge from the Fathers wrath, in whom only we can find Sanctuary, and whom the Father hath sent into the world to seek and save lost sinners. Now whether the Priests in the injunction of easie penances, and giving absolution, do not violat the prerogative of Jesus, and insensibly debauch souls from that affectionat and grateful duty they owe their dear Redeemer, into their trifling

ling methods and appointments, I refer it to all who know them.

But another opposition made to the Priestly office of Christ is, their conceit of the sacrifice of the Mass, which they believe is a formal expiation of sins, both for the living and dead, who are in Purgatory, Christ once offered himself up for taking away sin, which he did by that one sacrifice, and this is by the *Apostle* stated amongst the differences which are betwixt the sacrifices of Moses, which were to be dayly and yearly renewed and repeated, whereas Christ offered one sacrifice in the end of the *World*, so that there was no need of more, Heb. 10. 1, 2, 3, 12, 14. Now, to imagine that the Priests going through the office of the Mass, and his receiving the consecrated Elements, can have a vertue to expiate the sins of others, especially of the dead; is a thing so contrary to the most common impressions, that it will puzzle a mans belief to think any can credit it. And yet this is one of the Master-peeces of the Religion of that Church: it is true, in a right sense,

sense, that Sacrament may be called sacrifice; as it was by the Ancients, either in general, as Prayers, Praises, and Alms-deeds are called so in Scripture; or as it is a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ: but to imagine the action hath an expiatory force in it, is a visible derogation from the value of Christs death. And all the value is in any outward Sacramental action, can only be derived into the soul of the receiver: but it is absurd to think one mans action can be derived to another. And it clearly appears from the institution of the Lords Supper, that its end was the joint communicating of believers, which is perverted manifestly by the practice of these Priests, who communicate in name of the Spectatours.

Finally, what a derogation is it from the Priestly office of Christ? one branch whereof is his Intercession, to join Saints or Angels with him, in that work, nay and prefer them to him: which will be found too true if the office of the Virgin, and the prayers offered to her be compared, with these offered

offer'd to her Son. Did Christ by the merits of his Passion acquire this honour at so dear a rate? and shall we for whom he suffer'd, rob him so injuriously and sacrilegiously of his honour, and bestow it on these who are our fellow-servants?

But having touch'd this on the former part of my discourse, I advance my enquiry to the opposition given to the Regal Office of Christ: And first how contrary is it to the glory wherewith even his humane nature and body is resulgent in heaven, to believe that a *charm of five words*, muttered out by the Priest, shall have the virtue to produce his real and glorified Body, instead of the annihilated Elements of Bread and Wine, and yet under their accidents and appearances? this is a new and strange kind of humiliation, if true, by which he who is now cloath'd with glory, must be every day expos'd under so thick, so dark, and so contemptible a covering, as are the resemblances of Bread and Wine: What low thoughts of his Person must it breed, in such degenerated minds,

as are capable of believing this contrivance?

Again he as King of his Church, hath given her Laws, and Precepts to whose obedience she is obliged, to which none can add, without they acknowledge another head; and whose obligation none can untie or dispense with: for Christs dominion consists in this authority he hath over our consciences, which he hath vindicated into liberty, by delivering us from the bondage of corruption. If then, any pretend a power of obtruding new articles on our belief, or obligations on our consciences, these must be confessed to be injurious to the dignity wherewith Christ is vested. What shall then be said of him, who pretends an authority of dispensing with, and dissolving the obligation of oaths, of dissolving the Wedlock-bond, of allowing Marriage in the forebidden degrees? and as for their additions to the Laws of Christ, they are innumerable. And here what I mentioned last, calls me to minde of a pretty device, to multiply the forbidden degrees

degrees

degrees of Marriage, yea, and add the degrees of spiritual kindred; that is of kindred with our god-fathers, or god-mothers in Baptism, which is done upon no other design, but to draw in more to the Treasure of the Church, by frequent dispenses. But if I should here reckon up all the additions which by the authority of that Church are made to the Laws of Christ, I should resume all that I have hitherto alledged, they being visible additions to the doctrine and rules of the Gospel: and imposed with such unmerciful cruelty, that an Anathema is the mildest of the spiritual censures they thunder against such as comply not with their tyranny; and a faggot would be its civil Sanction, were the secular powers at their devotion. I do not deny but there is an authority both in the Civil and Ecclesiastick powers of enjoying things indifferent: but no authority beside Christs can reach the Conscience: Besides, if these indifferent things swell so in their number, be vain, pompous, and useless; and be
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imposed without all regard to the tender scruples of weak Consciences, they become tyrannical: and such as do so impose them, discover their affecting a tyrannical and lordly dominion over Consciences; and that they prefer their own devices, to the simpler methods of Christ, and the plainer, and easier rules of his Gospel.

But one instance of their abrogating the Laws of Christ, is more signal, in their violating the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: wherein though he instituted it under both kinds, and did so distribute it with the expresse command, *that all should drink* of it, yet they presumed, notwithstanding of that, and though the primitive Church distributed it in both kinds, which is confessed in their Canon; to snatch the cup from the Laity and enhance it to the Clergy. Now it is to be considered, that the value of the Sacramental actions, flowing only from their institution, the first appointment should be most religiously observed in them: Besides the universal extent of Christs word, *drink ye all of it* which

which was not used in the distribution of the bread, hath a particular mystery in it; to guard against the fore-
seen corruption of that part of it; and the reason given in the distribution of the Cup, shews it must reach all, that need the Blood of Christ for the remission of sins: which not being restrained to the Priests, shews, that the Cup without a direct opposition to the mind and command of Christ, ought not to be taken from the people; and any that will read the godly reasons given for this sacrilege, will see what a low account they have of the commands of Christ, when, upon such trifling pretences they will violate them. And with how much cruelty they backed this invasion of Christs authority, the History will declare: they beginning it with a perfidious turning of two witnesses who opposed it at *Constance*: and occasioning so much War and Blood-shed against those who adhered to the rule of the Gospel, in this matter, and refused to stoop to their tyranny.

But I advance to another invasion
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of Christs regal authority, committed by him who pretends to be the *Universal Bishop* of the Church, and so have authority over all Churchmen; whom he makes swear obedience to him, and looks on them but as his Delegates: it was unluckily done of *Gregory the great*, to be so severe on this head, as to condemn the title of *Universal Bishop*, as *Antiebristian*: but little dream'd he in how few years his Successour would aspire to that height of ambition. Now by this pretence, all these Officers whom Christ hath appointed to rule and feed his Church, are turned out of their authority, and made subject to him: and with how much pride he treads on his Fellow-Bishops, the Histories of many ages do declare. It is true, at first, as being Bishop of the Imperial City, the Bishops of Rome were highly esteemed, but pride, and ambition, began soon to leaven them: yet they were for the first four ages, looked upon, by the other Bishops, but as their Fellow-Bishops, and by the decrees of two general Councils, the

the Bishops of Constantinople were in all things, except the precedency, made equal to them: And by the decree of the Council of Nice, other Metropolitans are levelled with him. And here I must tell of a shameful forgery of three Bishops of Rome, who one after another, would have obtruded on the African Churches, a decree, allowing of appeals from them, to the Roman See, as if it had been made at Nice: which they of Africk rejected, and upon trial, found it to be none of the appointments at Nice, but a decree of the Council of Sardice.

But by degrees the Bishops of that City got up to the height they are now at; and not content with their usurping over their Brethren, and Fellow-Church-men; their next attempt was upon Princes, who deriving their authority from Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, by whom Kings do reign; it was an invasion of his power to attempt against his Vice-Generals on Earth. But the Popes made no bones of this, for being now held Christs Vicars on earth, with other blasphemous titles,

as *Vice-God*, yea, and *Lord God*, they thought their power was limited, as long as Kings and Emperours were not even in temporals subject to them. And therefore from the dayes of *Pope Gregory the 7th*, they pretended to a power of deposing Princes, disposing of their dominions to others, and dispensing with the oaths of fidelity their Subjects had sworn to them; and it was e^{asie} for them to make Crowns, change their Masters, as they pleased: for there was alwayes other ambitious Princes ready for their own ends to invade the dominions of these deposed Kings, upon the Popes warrant, and the generality of the People were so possessed with the Popes power of releasing souls from Purgatory, and from the punishments due to sin, that they were easily prevailed upon to follow his thunders; and by that time the Popes had swarms of Emissaries of the begging Order, of the *Friars*, who under shews of austere piety, gained much reverence and esteem in the world; and so got all subjected to the Papal tyranny.

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Now, should I instance this in particulars I should transgress the limits of a short discourse, by a long History; but the lives of *Gregory the 7th*, *Alexander the third*, *Boniface the 8th*, and *Julius the second*; to mention no more, will sufficiently convince any who will be at the pains to read them, as they are written by these who lived in that Communion. And *Matthew of Paris* will at length inform his Reader, how much, and how often *England* smarted under this tyranny.

And all this is so far from being denied, that it is defended avowedly by not a few of the *Canonists*, and *Jesuites*, and is a Doctrine dearly intertained in the Court of *Rome* to this day; as appeared from the late attempt of *P. Paul the fifth*, upon *Venice*; but the world is now a little wiser, then to be carried away by these Arts, and therefore that pretence is laid to sleep, till haply the beast be healed of the wound was given it at the *Reformation*.

But I cannot leave this particular, without my sad regrates, that too

deep & tincture of this spirit of Antichristianism is among many, who pretend much aversion to it; since the Doctrine of resisting Magistrates, upon colours of Religion, is so stiffly maintained, and adhered to, by many who pretend to be highly reformed, though this be one of the characters of the *scarlet-coloured Whore*. But thus far have we gone through the second part of Antichrist's character, and have discovered too clear indications of a difformity to the spirit and truth of the Christian Religion, in all the branches of the Honour and Worship due to Jesus the only Mediator of the new Covenant.

From this I proceed to the third part of my enquiry; which is, the opposition made to the great design of Christian Religion, for elevating the souls of men into a participation of the divine Nature, whereby the soul being inwardly purified, and the outward conversation regulated, the World may be restored to its *Primitive innocence*: and men may be admitted

mitted to an inward and intimat fellowship with their Maker. The first step of this renovation, is repentance; for God commands men every where to repent, and repentance and remission of sins are alwayes united: And this being an horrow at sin upon the sense of its native deformity, and contrariety to the Law of God, which makes the soul apprehend the hazard it hath incurred by it; so, as to study by all means possible to avoid it in all time coming; nothing doth prepare the mind more for faith in Christ, and the study of a new life, then repentance; which must needs be previous to these. But what devices are found to enervat this? sins must be divided into venial & mortal; the former deserving only some temporal punishment, and being easily expiated by some trifling peece of seeming devotion, and hereby many sins are struck out from the Penitents consideration: for who can have a great apprehension of that which is so slightly expiated. And this may be extended to the easie pardons, given for acknowledged mortal sins: for

he who thinks that God can be appeased for them, with the saying by rote, so many prayers, cannot possibly have deep apprehensions of their being either so displeasing to God, or so odious in themselves. But shall I to this add their asserting, that a *simple attrition*, which is a sorrow flowing from the consideration of any temporal evil, God hath brought upon the sinner, without any regard had either to the vileness of the sin, or the offence done to God by it, that this (I say) can suffice for justifying sinners, and qualifying them for the Sacrament, whereby the necessity of contrition and sorrow flowing from the principle of the love of God, is made only a high degree of perfection, but not indispensibly necessary? In the next place, all these severities they enjoyn for penances, do but tend to nourish the life of sin, when sinners see a trade set up by which they can buy themselves off from the wrath of God. To this, is to be added the doctrine of Indulgences, which is so direct an opposition to Evangelical repentance, as if it had been contrived

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for dispossessing the World of the sense of it.

That which is next pressed in the Gospel for uniting the souls of mankind to God, is that noble ternary of graces, faith, hope and love, by which the soul rests in God by a holy affiance in him, believing the truth of his Gospel, expecting the accomplishment of his Promises, waiting for the full fruition of him, and delighting in his glorious perfections, and excellencies. Now how much all this is shaken by these carnall and grosse conceptions, the Roman doctrine offers of God in their Image and Mass-worship, and by their Idolatry to Saints is apparent? Are they not taught to confide more in the Virgin of their Tutelar Saint, then in the holiest of all? doth not the fears of Purgatory damp the hopes of future blessedness? And finally, what impious doctrine hath been publicly licensed and printed in that Church, of the degrees of the love we owe to God? some blasphemously teaching, that we are not at all bound to love him, others mincing it so, as if

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they were afraid of his being too much beloved. In a word, there is an impiety in the Morals of some of that Church, particularly among the Disciples of Loyola, beyond what was ever taught amongst the worst of the heathen Philosophers, which hath been fully discovered by some of the honest and more zealous of that communion. And though these corruptions have not been avowed by the head of that Church, yet by their being publicly vented, by the deaf ear he gives to all the complaints against them, and by the constant caresses and privileges he heaps upon that Order which teacheth them, he discovers either his great satisfaction in that corrupt doctrine, or that upon the account of other interests, he is content to betray the souls of Christians, into the corruption of such impious and ungodly leaders, since the Order that hath owned all these corruptions is yet possessed of the consciences of the greater part of them that own the communion, they being the universal Confessours. And since they licen-

the publick venting of so much corrupt doctrine in printed writings; what reason have we to suspect their base compliance with sins in their more secret and unknown practisings, with such poor deluded souls, as trust to their conduct; of which many proofs are brought by others of that same Church.

But I pursue my enquiry into the other traces of the Antichristian corruption, of the purity, and power, of our most holy faith: solemn worship, and secret devotion, are the great means of uniting souls to God, and of deriving the assistance of his spirit and grace to us; but when these are perverted in an unknown tongue, how incapable are they of reaching that end? and the doctrine of the efficacy of the Sacraments, for conveying of grace *by the work wrought*, looks like the design against all serious preparation for the worthy receiving of them; since by that doctrine, a man, be he never so evil prepared, yet is sure of their efficacy; for if his Priest absolve him, and he have a *simple attrition* for

for sin, without any thing of the love of God, he is by their doctrine and conduct qualified for receiving worthily, were his heart never so much united to sin, or averse from all devotion, or application to divine matters. And what complaints shall be here made of these who teach, that the sure way of gaining the favour of God, which they phrase by the *keyes of paradise*, is to say the *Ave*, to bid the blessed *Virgin good-morrow every day*, or to send our *Angel Guardian* to salute her? or finally, to wear a *Meddallor Rosary* in devotion to her, though from the first time we begin to wear it, we never again think of her; doth not all this look like a conspiracy against the power of godliness?

But shall we next consider the Moral Law, which though Christ said, *he came not to dissolve, but to fulfill*, Mat. 5. 17. Yet they have found out distinctions and doctrines to destroy it. It is true, what may be said here, cannot so directly, as to every particular, be charged on the Roman Church, since, it hath not been decreed by
 Pope.

Pope, or Council ; but when profane *Casuits* have printed doctrines, which tend to the subversion of the most common principles of virtue, and morality, and these are licensed according to the rule of that Church : and for as publick as they are, and for all the censures and complaints others have passed upon them, yet they continue without any censure from the chair of Rome, it is a shrewd presumption that they are not unwelcome to that See : though for good manners sake they have given them no other owning, but a connivance, joyned with an extraordinary cherrishing of that School which vents them.

Two general Doctrines they have, which at two strokes dissolve all the bonds of virtue. The one is, *the Doctrine of probability*, the other, *of good intention*. By the first, they teach, that if any approved Doctor of the Church have held an opinion about any practical thing, as probable any Christian may with a safe conscience follow, were it never so much condemned by others ; and did it appear with

with the blackest viſage : and by this it is, that ſcarce there is a ſin which may not be ſafely hazarded on, ſince there hath been of the approved Doctors of that Church, who have made a ſhift by diſtinctions, to repreſent the worſt actions, not only as probable, but as really good. The next Doctrine is, of good intention, whereby they teach a man to commit the groſſeſt Legerdemain with God and his own conſcience imaginable ; by which he may act any ſin he will, provided he intend not that, but ſome other good deſign, or motive : And any that will read the Provincial Letters, or the Mystery of Jeſuitiſm, and compare their Citations with the Authors, whence they take them, will ſoon be ſatisfied of the truth of this.

We have already ſeen how that Church violates the two firſt Commandments, by her idolatry : whereby in oppoſition to the firſt, ſhe worſhips Saints and Angels, with thoſe acts and expreſſions of adoration only due to God. The ſecond is alſo palpably violated by their Image, wor-
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Iniquity unveiled.

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ship, and adoring God under sensible and external representations. The third is made void by the Popes pretending to dispence with Oaths, and to annul their obligation, as also by their Doctrines of *equivocation* and *mental reservations*, in all Oathes, both assertory, and promissory, besides the impious Doctrines of some Casuists, that justify the *prophaning of Gods Sacred Name*, in rash and common swearing. Their contempt of the fourth Precept is not denied, it being usually among them a day of mercating, dancing, and foolish jollity: many among them teaching, that to hear Mass that day, doth fully answer the obligation for its observance. Their contempt of the fifth follows, upon the Doctrine of the Popes power, of deposing Princes, and freeing the Subjects from their obligation to them; by which they are taught to rebel, and resist the ordinance of God. Besides, their Casuists allow it as lawful to desire the Parents death, provided it be not out of malice to him, but out of a desire of good to themselves: that they
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may enjoy their inheritance, or be rid of their trouble. Yea, some of their impious Casuists say, that children may lawfully intend the killing of their parents, and may disown them, and marry without their consent.

For the sixth Command, their Casuists do generally allow to kill in defence of honour, life, or goods, even though the hazard of losing them be not near and evident, but afar off, and uncertain: and they teach, that a man is not bound to stay till another smite him; but if he threaten him, or if he offend with his words, or if one know that he hath a design upon his honour, life, or goods, he may with a good conscience prevent, and kill him. And this they extend to all sorts of persons, both Secular and Religious; allowing it to sons against their fathers. and they leave it free to them to execute this by whatever means they judge most proper, whether by force, or surprize, or by the service of others, if they dare not attempt to kill by their own hands; which they stretch to the case of one

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who knows another guilty of a crime, and intends to pursue him for it; and they allow the guilty person, if he know no other way of escape, to kill him who intends his accusation, that he may thereby preserve his life; in order to which they also allow it lawful to kill the witnesses that may prove the crime.

As for the *seventh Command*, modestly cannot name their polluted doctrines about it: they barred the Clergy the lawful use of Marriage, but did allow them concubinate, and the publick licenses given to base houses in the Popes dominions, prove that See a Mother of fornications, even in the letter, the Religious houses being likewise full of irreligious intanglements; into a course of life, which many times they are not able to bear; but being restrained from the honourable ordinance of God, many of these houses have proven either nests of filthiness, or of secret impurities; which it seems by the rules of confession, and the questions their Confessours puts to them, are known to abound among them. And any that

have read these, will confess, that it defiles a chaste mind to read them: but what must it be to ask them, especially at those of a different Sex? Shall I also here mention the frequent dispensing with marriages within degrees forbidden, and their as frequent dissolving of that sacred knot; though (*as if they had resolved on a contradiction to all the rules of the Gospel*) they refuse to dissolve the bond on the account of adultery, which Christ hath made the only ground that can justify the dissolution of it? But shall I add to this, the base impieties, of which not only these of purple and scarlet Livery among them have been notoriously guilty? but even the villanies of some that have worn the Triple Crown; as I should grow too tedious, so I must needs tell things which to a pure mind were both nauseating to write, and to read. Those that have been in that spiritual Babylon, know, that is a Sodom, even in the letter, none being more guilty of that crying wickedness, than those that bear the character of religious or sacred Orders.

And what shall we think of the Scarlet Fraternity, that produced a Monster that attempted Heaven it self, by writing in defence of that impiety, which it avenged by fire and brimstone, and yet had no censure passed on him for it? whereas for the least tincture of Calvinism, or Lutheranism, he had been condemned to the faggot. Some of them do also teach, that Fornication is not forbidden by the Laws of Nature, and only by positive Precepts, so that it may be dispensed with.

For the eighth Command, those profane Casuists have made such shifts for it, that none needs to be guilty of theft, for they teach it to be no sin to take that from another which he made no use of, but may well want, and that in such a case, he who steals, is not obliged to restitution: Others of them teach, that he who stole a great sum, is not obliged to the restitution of the whole, but only of so much as may make the theft not notable: But they teach, that small thefts, even though often repeated, are but Venial sins, which is an excellent Doctrine for war-
ranging.

randing Servants intently to purloin their Masters goods : they also teach Arts of escaping just debts, beyond all the subtilties of false Lawyers ; which the Jesuites themselves have often put in practice, and have found out Arts for justifying oppressive Usury, defrauding of Creditors, ruining of Commerce, and making havock of our neighbours goods, without injustice.

For the *ninth Command*, though it be so contrary to nature, that the worst of men count it a reproach to be charged with falshood, and lying ; yet they have favoured it avowedly : for by their doctrines of equivocating, and using mental reservations, the greatest falsities in the world may be averred and sworn, without sin. And the value they set on a strict observance of promises, and candor in them, appeared at *Constance*, where a whole Council taught *Sigismund* the Emperor, to burn *John Huss*, and *Ferome* of *Prague*, though he had given them his safe conduct : for they taught him that faith was not to be kept to Hereticks. Another such like

trip of one of the Popes, proved fatal both to Ladislaus, and the Kingdom of Hungary, at Varna; where they breaking the Truce they had sworn to the Turk, upon the Popes warrant, were signally punished for their treachery. The Doctors of the fore-mentioned School do also teach, that he who hath born false witness in a matter that may cost another his life, is not bound to retract it, if that retraction may bring great evils upon him. They also propose methods for suborning witnesses, and falsifying of Writs and Records, without any sin; and that all this may be done to damage a person with some horrid imputation, who is led as a witness to prove any thing against one, that thereby he may be cast from witnessing.

And as for the tenth Command, they have struck out all the first motions of the mind to evil, from being accounted sins; and by their division of sins into Venial, and Mortals, they make sure enough work of this Command, that it shall not be broken mortally. It were an endless work to

to go and make out all these particulars, of their dissolving the Moral Law by clear proofs: but he who desires satisfaction in that, will find it in the *Provincial Letters*, or the *Morals of the Jesuites*.

But if we pass from the Law, to the Gospel, we shall find they have made no less bones of it. We are all over the Gospel called to be heavenly minded, to despise the World, and to set our affections on things above, and particularly, Church-men are taught not to seek the riches, splendour and vanities of a present world, which was most vigorously enforced by the example of Christ and his holy Apostles. But how contrary to this is that Religion, whose great design is, the enriching and aggrandizing of the Teachers and Pastours of it, chiefly of him who pretends to be the supreme and sole Pastour? I need not here remind you of the Trade of Indulgences, by which that Church rose to its riches and pomp; nor need I tell what a value they set on our outward actions of piety, the chief of these

chief being the enriching of Churches,
and Abbayes; and how these were com-
mended to the World as the sure
means of attaining eternal life. Shall
we add to this the visible and gross se-
cularity and grandeur, in which the
the Head, and other Prelates of that
Church do live? The Head of it be-
coming in all things a temporal Prince,
perpetually busied in intrigues of
state, and ballancing the Princes of
Europe, and chiefly of Italy, and what
avarice and *Simoniackal* practices abound
in that Court, all who have written of
it with any degrees of ingenuity, do
acknowledge, all things are venial
there: Money being able to raise the
lowest and unworthiest to the highest
promotions; the Cardinals are also
employed either upon the Interests of
Princes, and chiefly of the two great
crowns; or to make the Popes Ne-
cessaries have a greater stroke in the next
of a *clave*; or upon some such carnal
account. And perhaps, for good
conscience sake, a Schollar, or a Person
summons for devotion, may get a red
coat, but such are alwayes the least
esteemed

esteemed in the Colledge : all affairs being governed by the Popes Nephews or the Protectors of the Crowns. And who shall expect that such a company of secular ignorant, (I mean in matters of Religion) and oftentimes contentious men, should be the great Sanhedrim, by whose advice all that belongs to Religion must be managed. These must be likewise the Electors of the Pope, when the See is vacant whom they choose out of their own number, who is alwayes elected by the prevailing interests of one of the Crowns, or by the faction of the former Popes Nephews. And what cablings, what bespeaking of suffrages and what impudent ambitus is commonly practised in the elections of Popes, is well enough known, nor can it be denyed? Now, what man of common sense can imagine, that a Pope thus elected by Simoniack Arts, and carnal Interests, can be *Christi Vicar on Earth*, or have the Holy Ghost alwayes affixed to his chair, that he shall never erre in any of his decrees? Truly he that can believe this, may believe

thing that is gross and absurd. Not the whole frame and contrivance that Court turned so entirely secular, that not a vestige of the Character of a Church, or of Church-men, remains? And to this, shall I add all the splendor of their Apparel, the state of their Processions, and the ceremonies of their Coronation, and how they wear a Triple Crown? which being so well known to all who ever were at Rome, need not be demonstrated on by me. But the mention of the Crown calls me to mind of the general accomplishment of that, of *Mystery, being on the forehead of the Pope*; since the word *Mystery*, was a great while the inscription on the front of their Triple Crown, though now altered; which being proved by others, I may not stay to make good. From this I should descend to the Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots, and shew how secular they are become; all their design being to enhance the power, and monopolize riches: which contagion is also conveyed into the inferior Orders of

E

the

the Clergy, who by the magnifying
of their Images, Saints, and Reliques
use all the Arts they can devise to
enriching of themselves and their
friends. And even these Orders that
pretend to mortification, and aban-
doning the world, and talk of nothing
but their poor and austere manner of
life, yet have possessed themselves of
no small part of the riches and glory
of the world. It is true, there is a
young Brotherhood among them
which though the youngest, yet has
outstripped the elder, and made them
stoop to it, and serve it. And what
base and fordid wayes that society has
pursued, for arriving at the highest
pitch of greatness, and riches, and
how successfully they have managed
their designs, is sufficiently cleared
what through the zeal of some of the
honester of that Communion, who
through the envy of other emulating
orders, all these things do fully prove
to us how unlike that Church is
the poor, and pure simplicity of Christ
and his Apostles, and of the first age
of the Church?

fy. If we further examine the characters of Evangelical purity, we have them from the mouth of our *Saviour*, when he commands us to learn of him, that he was meek and lowly in heart: but he made it the distinguishing badge of his disciples, that they loved one another. Now for humility, it is true, the Head of that Church calls himself the servant of the servants of God; but how far such humility is from his design, his aspiring pretences have loudly declare. All the world must stoop to him; not only must his whorl-Bishops swear obedience to him, and become his Vassals, but the Kings of the earth must be his foot-stool, and all must pay him that servile homage of kissing his foot; an admiration as insolent as extravagant. His power must be magnified with the most blasphemous Titles of his being God, our Lord God on earth Omnipotent; with a great deal more of such servile Adulations, offered to him from the Parasites of that Court. In a word, a great part of that Religion, when rightly considered, will be found

on design contrived and abetted, for exalting him to the highest degree of insolence: but so many proofs of this were already upon other occasions hinted at, that it is needless to go over them again: and that same leaven, leavens the whole lump of their Clergy; who all pretend that by their Ecclesiastical character they are only subject to their Head, and enjoy an immunity from the Civil Authority, be their crimes what they may be. And an in-road on this pretence of late, from the *State of Venice*, when they seized on two Churchmen that were highly guilty, drew out so much of their most holy Father's indignation, that he thundered against them, and finding the weakness of the *spiritual sword*, resolved to try the edge of his *temporal one* upon them, in patrociny, partly of these Villanes, and partly of the covetousness of the Clergy, to which the Senat had set a small limit, by a decree; but finding they were like to prove too hard for him, he was willing to put up his sword.

Iniquity unveiled. TOT

word, rather then to kill and eat, as
one of his Cardinals advised him.

Shall I with this also tell the instan-
ces of the ambition of Cardinals, who
from their first original of being the
Presbyters of Rome, have risen up to the
height of counting themselves the com-
panions of Kings, and in their habits
reflect a Princely splendor, but have
unluckily chosen the Liveries of the
Whore; for they wear Scarlet, as the
Bishops do Purple, the foretold colours
of the Whores Garments. Shall I next
shew to what a height of pride the ex-
altation of the Priestly dignity among
them hath risen? as if it were equal,
or preferable to the condition of
Princes. The Priests giving absolu-
tion, is a sure device to make his
power be much accounted of, since he
can forgive sin. The gorgeous and rich
apparel they wear in worship, serves
also to set off their dignity. And
what a goodly device is it, that their
pittle must make one of the sacred
rites in Baptism? Certainly that must
be esteemed a marvellous holy creature,
whose very excrement is so sacred.

Their enhancing the Cup to themselves from the people, was another trick for raising of their esteem : but above all things, their power of transmitting the substance of the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, by the uttering that charm of five words, was a marvellous device, to make all the world admire them, who can so easily, and every day work a miracle, compared to which, all the miracles of the Gospel may pass for ordinary actions. What a great piece of wonder must such a man be held to be, who can thus exercise his authority over the very person of Jesus Christ, notwithstanding of all the glory to which he is now exalted ? And it was no contemptible Engine for that same design, to possess the people with a belief of the Priests offering in the Mass an expiatory Sacrifice, for the sins both of the dead and living ; which proved a Stock for them to trade on, both for their ambition and covetousness, and from these evidences we may infer, how little of the humility of Christ appears in the Church

Church, from the highest to the lowest.
The Next branch of the Evangelical Spirit is, meekness and charity, which leads me unto the consideration of the fourth design of the Christian Religion, which was the uniting of mankind under one head, and into one body, which it designed to effectuate, not only by these sublime Precepts of the highest love, and the outmost extent of the pardoning of injuries, and of returning them with the best offices of love and prayer; which the blessed Author of our faith did enact; but by the associating of the faithful into one Society, called the *Church*, which was to be united with the closest bonds, of Brotherly love, and Charity; and was to be governed by Pastors and Teachers, who should feed the flock with the sincere milk of the Word; and was also to be cemented together by the Ligaments of the holy Sacraments, by which, as by joynts and bands they are both united to their head, and knit together. Now we are from these things to consider what opposition that Church we are now considering,

gives to this branch of the end of Christianity.

And first, whereas the Gospel pronounceth us free, and that we are no more the servants of men, but of God, if any attempt upon that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, he changeth the authority of the Church into a tyrannical Yoke; much more, if all the new articles of belief, and rules for practice, be imposed under the severest certificats. But here we are to consider, that all these things which that Church hath imposed on all of her Communion, for which we withdrew from her, are additions to our faith; for in this we mainly differ from that Church, that whatever we acknowledge, they acknowledge likewise, but with a great many additions, we believe the Scriptures are a rule for Christians, and they believe the same; but they add traditions, and the authority of the Church to the Scriptures. We believe that God is to be worshipped spiritually, they believe the same; but add that he may be worshipped by Images and sensible Figures.

Figures. We believe Christ to be the Mediator betwixt God and Man, they believe the same; but add to this the intercession of Saints. We hold that God and Christ are to be worshipped, they hold the same, but add Saints and Angels to our worship. We believe Heaven and Hell to be the several States of the future life, they believe the same; but add Purgatory betwixt them, to the day of judgement. We believe Baptism and the Lords Supper to be the Sacraments of the new Covenant, they believe the same; but add five more. We believe Christ is spiritually and really present in the Lords Supper, this they believe; but add the unconceivable Tenent of his corporal presence. In a word, it might be instanced in many other particulars, how they have driven us from their Communion, by their additions to the truth, and sincerity of the Gospel, which they have adulterated by their inventions; and not only have they imposed all these things, but thundered out *Anathema's* on all that que-

sion them, and have so wreathed all their sopperies, with that main and fundamental article of their belief, of the infallibility of their Church, that it is impossible to hope for their recovery, till they renounce that Principle which is so dear to them. For if their Church be infallible, then in no matter of faith or practice can she decree amiss, and therefore the lawfulness and sanctity of all her decrees must be maintained with an equal vigour and zeal; for if in one of them she step aside, her infallibility is for ever gone. And by this we may see to how little purpose it is to treat of accommodating matters with that Church, since there is no possibility of our union with them, without we turn over entirely to them: since they cannot part with one of their errors, without they first renounce that which is the dearest of them all, to wit, the unerring authority of their Church. How cruel then is that Church, which addeth the severe sanction of an Anathema to all her decrees; even about the most trifling matters? and about things

things that are by their Confession of their own natures indifferent. And confectary to this is, that cruel opinion they hold, that none can be saved out of their Communion: pretending there is no Salvation without the true Church, which they restrict to these who are under the obedience of the Roman Bishop; and this is what they usually frighten all with.

But it is to be considered what the true notion of the Church is, that so we may see through this frightful Vi-
ar. The Church then is a Society of Christians united in the same faith, for worshipping of God jointly. And another definition of a Church cannot be produced from Scripture; for the Church being called the Body of Christ, its union with him as its head, is held forth by the Apostle in these words, Col. 1. 19. The head Christ from whom the whole body by joints and bonds, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. From which words, we see what constitutes a man a member of the true Church; which is first, his union

to Christ as his head, together with a dependence on him for growth and nutriment: and next, his being knit to all others who are thus united to Christ; which is first the inward union of divine Charity, by which he loves all who cleave to Christ as their head: and next, his associating himself with them in outward visible acts of worship, which every Christian is bound to do, with all that worship God in Spirit and truth. But if a Society of Christians do visibly swerve from Christ in many great and signal contradictions to the honour due to his Person, and to the obedience due to his Laws, & do grossly adulterate the worship, so that communion cannot be had with that Church, without departing from the head Christ, then it can be no departing from the Church, to adhere to Christ and his true worship, and to separate from the corruptions and errors brought in upon the Christian religion. If then it appear that the Church of Rome hath departed from the truth and simplicity of the Gospel, in so many great and main points, these

th these who attempted the reforming
and her to her first purity, and finding that
t to not to be hoped for, did unite among
th themselves for serving and worshipping
nion God aright, cannot be charged with
over separation from the true Church.

ad: But by that cruel Tenent of theirs,
with they breed up all their Children in the
vor-greatest uncharitableness imaginable,
d to condemning all who cannot believe all
irrit their strange Doctrines, or concur in
ians their unhallowed worship. Thus they
any are the Schismatiques who have de-
the parted from the true Church, and who
to force from their Communion all who
ols adhere to it: but this cruelty rests
m not in uncharitable censures, but hath
hat extended it self to as much bloody
the and barbarous rage, as ever sprung from
rt Hell; for all the cruelty of the heathen
to Persecutors, cannot match the practices
to of that Whore, that hath been so of-
are ten drunk with the blood of the Saints,
eli and of the Martyrs of Jesus. What en-
he aged cruelty appeared against the
om poor Waldenses, for the separating
of from thir Corruptions? how many of
ts, all Sexes and Ages, were cruelly but-
chased

chered down by the procurement of the Rulers of that Church; and because the *Albigenses* lived under the protection of Princes that favoured them, how did the Pope depose their Princes, and instigate other ambitious invaders to seize on their dominions: which to effectuate, a *Croissade* was proclaimed, that had been formerly practised against the Enemies of the Christian faith, and heaven was promised to such as went against these poor innocents, whereupon they were killed by thousands, without all mercy. Never was there any who had the zeal or honesty in these dark ages to witness against the apostacy of the Church, but the Pope and Clergy used all means to get his zeal rewarded with a faggot. And when the time of reformation came, with what rage and spite did the Pope by his Letters and Legates instigate all the Princes of Europe to enmity against them; but as these things were not done in corners, so they are still so fresh in our remembrance, by the copious accounts we have of them, that I need not tell what Arts the Popes

Popes and other Ecclesiasticks used, to set all *Germany* on fire upon this account : nor need I tell the cruelty was exercised in the *Nether-Lands*, in *Charles* the fifth his time, in which more then an hundred thousand are said by *Grotius* to have been butchered on the account of Religion. And in his Son *Philips* time, the *D. of Alva*, did in a short time cut down 36000. Nor need I tell the cruelties were practised in *France* for about forty years together ; nor of that treacherous Massacre wherein there was an equal mixture of perfidy and cruelty, which for all that was intertain'd at *Rome* with great joy and applauses. It will be also needless to tell of their cruelty in *England* in *Queen Mary's* dayes, which was chiefly managed by the Churchmen. And many are yet alive who remember what enraged cruelty appeared in our neighbour-Island, against all of our Religion, which did not only flow from the fury of an oppressed People, but they were trained, encouraged, and warranted to it, by their Priests, and the *Nuntio* who came after.

afterwards among them, discovered
 who was the spring of all their mon-
 ous. Shall I to this add all the private
 assassinations committed on that ac-
 count, which were not only practised
 but justified? I might here conge-
 many instances; Brother murdering
 Brother, on the account of Religion.
 Neither is *Clement a Dominican*, his
 murdering *Henry the third*, nor *Chast*
lets attempt, nor *Ravalliacs fact*
Henry the fourth, forgotten. *Q. Elizabeths*
life, is full of these attempts, and
 the blackest of them all was, the *Gun-*
powder treason; all which are to be
 charged on that Whore, because the
 Doctrine of murdering Heretique
 Princes, was taught, licenced, print-
 ed, and yet not condemned in that
 Church. From these hints we may
 guess, how much of the lowly, meek,
 and charitable Spirit, is to be found
 with them. But should I to this add
 the horrid cruelties exercised in these
 massacres, I should be almost past be-
 lief, had I not undeniable Historians
 for verifying it? but the mildest of
 them being to be burned alive, we
 may

may guess what the more savage have
done by their tortures and lingering
Deaths. Next, shall I mention their
Courts of Inquisition which have been
set among them in the hands of Church-
men, from the dayes of their pretending
to *Saint Dominick*, whose order have
been the great Instruments of the cru-
elties of that Church, and whose
procedure being tyed to no forms of
equity, or justice, is as unjust as un-
merciful, persons being haled to their
dark Courts, upon bare suspicions, or
secret Informations, without leading
proofs against them, are by Tor-
ture examined, not only of their own
opinions, but of all that are known to
them, whose Testimony though
drawn from them by cruel Torture,
will bring the same Tortures on all they
relate; neither is there any mercy
for any whom this Court declares
heretick, but the Civil Magistrat must
condemn them to the fire. Now what
can that considers the meekness of
Christ, and the Evangelical Spirit, can
think that Church the Spouse of
Christ, that hath rioted it with such sa-
vage

vage rage, against thousands of persons, for no other crime, but because they adhered firmly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and would not consent or concur with these signal and palpable corruptions with which they have adulterated it.

But as from the constitution of their Church, we see their difformity from the Gospel-rule; so we will next consider their Church-men, and we shall find how far they have strayed from the first Original. Church-men ought to be the Guides and Pastours of souls. Now, how little of this there is among them, we will soon be resolved in? What do the Popes do about the feeding of souls? when do they preach the Gospel? or dispense the Sacraments? Alas! it were below the height of *his holiness*, to stoop to such mean Offices. Does any vestige of a Church-man remain in that Court? and do they not directly rule in the Spirit of the *Lords of the Gentiles*? And in this the Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots, do to their portion imitate their most Holy Fa-

Consider ; abandoning wholly the work
 of the Gospel, as if they bore an emp-
 ty title, or at most, were only bound
 to say Mass one some greater holy
 dayes ; but in all other things do
 willingly cast off the care of their
 flocks. Shall I heretell of the relaxa-
 tion of all the ancient rules, about
 the offices and duty of Church-men,
 which these later ages have invented,
 we need mention how children are made
 bishops, how they allow of Pluralities,
 Non-residencies, Unions, Commendams,
gratia expectativa's, with a great ma-
 ny more corruptions, which are every
 day authorized and granted at Rome ;
 and so zealous were they for these, that
 they strugled hard against the honest
 counsel of some at Trent, who would have
 a residence declared of divine right,
 and got it, though with much ado to
 be laid aside. And thus it is that the
 bishops and Abbots among them do
 for most part relinquish their Charges,
 to live at the Courts of Princes, and
 insinuat themselves upon all affairs
 and offices : and swarmes of them go
 to Rome, gaping for preferment there.

I deny

I deny not but even these late ages have produced great men among them, who seem to have designed the reviving of the Ancient Discipline both among the Clergy, and the People; but as these instances are rare, so they were hated and persecuted at Rome for their zeal. Witness the condemning of *Arnolds Book of frequent Communion*, and the severity of *Jansenius*, and the *Abbot of S. Cyran*, with their followers, have met with and thus whatever individuals that Church may have produced, yet the corruptions I have hinted at, are notoriously, publickly, and generally practised in it, and no where so avowedly, as at the Court of Rome. But to compensate this defect of the Superior Clergy, they have swarms of the inferior ranks, every where, both secular and regular, who seem to mind the care of souls very seriously. But not to reflect again upon any thing hath been hitherto said of their bad conduct of souls, I shall now only take notice of the authority they pretend to, as if the People were bound blindly to follow

Follow their Confessors direction, as
the voice of God, which clearly makes
them the servants of men, and subjects
them to the heaviest yoke, which is
most directly contrary to the *liberty*
wherewith *Christ hath made us free* :
and what a rack to souls have they
made Confession; and what an Engine
to get into the secrets of all the
World, and to bring mankind under
their subjection, is obvious enough
to any that considers it? and to en-
force it the more, as they teach it sim-
ply necessary to Salvation, so the au-
thority they made the World believe
the Priests were vested with for par-
doning sin, together with their easie
pardons and slight penances, did root
deep in the hearts of all of that
Communion.

But I go next to examine the Sa-
craments, of which so much being said
already, little remains to be added.
By their dividing the Cup from the
bread, they destroy Christs Instituti-
on, and so make it no Sacrament, and
the hearing of Mass without commu-
nicate, though it make up the great-
est

est part of their worship, yet is pure
 a service of their own devising, without
 warrant from Christs Institution, who
 said, *take, eat, this is my Body*; thereby
 shewing, he intended the vertue and
 benefit of that Ordinance, only for
 those who received it. And in a word
 let any read and compare the Instituti-
 on of the Lord Supper, as it is in
the three Gospels, and the Epistle to the
Corinthians, together, with the whole
 office of the Mass, as it is in the Ro-
 man Church, and then let him on his
 Conscience pass his verdict, whether
 they have adhered to, or departed
 from, Christs Institution in that piece
 of their worship. Finally, one great end
 of all solemn Worship; being the Com-
 munion of Saints, in their joint adora-
 tions, and mutual concurrence in di-
 vine services; what union can they
 have with God? or what communion
 can they hold one with another? who
 perform all their Worship in an un-
 known Tongue, which is the rule and
 constant practice of that Church be-
 yond Sea; though for the better ven-
 ding of their sophisticated stuff among

they give the people Books of devotion in their vulgar Language, yet continue to say the Office of the Mass in latine.

And thus far I have run a round that great Circle, I propos'd to my self from the beginning of this discourse: and have examined the chief Designs of the Christian Religion, and have found the great and evident contradictions, not only to them in all their branches, by Rome established and authorized Doctrines and practises of that Church; in which I have fully justified the wise mans observation, that *he who increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow*; and have laid enough to evince to all rational and considering mindes, how unsafe it is for any that would keep a good Conscience, to hold Communion with them. But I have not finish'd my design, till I likewise examine the Characters of the Christian Religion, and compare them with these are to be found in the Synagogue at Rome.

The first Character of our faith is, that it was delivered to the World by

by men sent of God, and divinely inspired, who proved their Mission by Miracles. Now these Doctrines about which we differ from that Church cannot pretend to no such divine original, let them tell us what inspired man, did first teach the Worship of Images, of the Mass, of Angels, and Saints, and of Reliques: what man sent of God was the first Author of the beleif, of the corporal presence, of the Sacrifice of the Mass, of the Popes supremacy, of Purgatory, of Indulgences, and of all these innumerable superstitions, of which the Scripture is absolutely silent: for if these doctrines were not the off-spring of Revelations, they are none of the Oracles of God, nor can we be obliged to beleive them as such. It is true, they vouch Scriptures for proof to some of these, but these are so far stretched, that their sure retreat is in the Sanctuary of the Churches Traditions: but till a cleare warrant be produced for proving them, it was imposible that any falshood could have that way crept into the World, now we must be excused from beleiving these

in these. Neither is it possible to know what Traditions came from the Apostles, for as the vulgar are not capable of pursuing the enquiry, so the loss of most of the writings of the first two Ages, makes it impossible to know what traditions came from the apostles.

But this I say not, that we need fear this trial, for the silence of the earliest and purest ages, about these things which are controverted among us, is evidence enough that they were not unknown to them; especially since in their Apologies which they wrote to the Heathens for their Religion and Worship, wherein they give an abridgement of their Doctrines, and a Rubrick of their worship; they never once mention these great evils, for which but now accuse that Church. It is helme, a late ingenious Writer, whose sincere zeal and candor had much offended the Roman Court, and drawn censures on himself and his Books; sought a way to repair his reputation by a new Method of proving the truth of the Opinions held in the Roman Church;

The Mystery of

Church; which was, that since
present Church held them, that they
that they had them so from their
cestors, and they from theirs, till
run backwards to the days of the Ap
tles: alledging that a change in
Worship was unpracticable, since
could not be done in a corner, but
the view of all the World; who it is
to be imagined were capable of suff
ing any great or considerable chan
to be made in that which was daily
in their view, and much in their esteem
therefore he concludes, that every
Generation adhered to that belief,
which they were born: and so
change in any great substantial and
sible part of worship could be made
It is true, he applies this only to
belief of the corporal presence, which
he attempts to prove could never
have been introduced into the Church
had it not been conveyed down from
the Apostles. He hath indeed set
this with all the beauties of wit,
elegancies of stile, and much profound
reading. But with how great and con
sistent advantages, both of reason,
learn

arning, this pretence hath been baffled; I leave it to the judgment of all who have been so happy as to read Mr. Glandhis incomparable Writings? And the common sense of mankind will prove this but an imposture, how fairly soever adorned; for if we find it certain that any Doctrines, or main parts of worship are now received into that Church, and if from the undeniable evidences of History, and Writings of Ancients, it appear, that these things were not received in the ancient Church, then it is certain there hath been a change made from what was then, to what is now, though an ingenious invention may make it appear very difficult, to imagine how and when the change came in; especially when it was insensibly, and by pieces advanced. If then it be proved that the Fathers believed the Elements in the Sacrament were really bread and wine, and not changed from their own nature, but only types and figures of the Body of Christ, then we are sure a change must have been made, though the ignorance of some ages

makes it a hard task to clear all particulars about it. It is true, the Fathers did highly magnify this Sacrament, with many expressions, which (though the vehemence of Divine Rhetorick can well justify, yet) will not bear a Logical *Examen*, but when they speak in a cooler Stile, nothing can be more clear, then that they believed nothing of the corporal presence. But may not that reasoning of the impossibility of a change in worship, be as well applied to the taking the Chalice from the People, who reason should be imagined so tenacious of so great a privilege, that no consideration should have obliged them to part with it? and yet we know, do they deny, how it was wrung from them, about 250 years ago. What may seem less credible then for the People to consent, to have their worship in an unknown Tongue, and yet we know that all once worshipped in the Mother Tongue, but that after (the overthrow of the Roman Empire,) the Latine Tongue decayed, the barbarous worship was obtruded

the World? and what peece of worship is both more visible, and more contrary to the clearest evidence of scriptures, especially to the comandments, in which the People were alwayes instructed, then the worshipping of Images? And though we know well enough that for the first seven centuries the Christian World abhorred them, yet within a hundreth years after that, we find a great part of it bewitched with them. And what can be thought more uneasy for the World to have received, then the popes absolute authority over all the Churches and States of the World? One should think that though Religion, and Reason, had lien out of the way, yet Interest, and Ambition, had withstood this: yet we see clearly by what steps they crept up, from being Bishops of the Imperial City, in an equality of power with their neighbouring Bishops, into that culminating hight, to which they have now mounted. In a word, we refuse not to appeal to the first four Ages of the Church, in these matters that we quar-

rel the Roman Church for, we deny not but humane infirmity began soon to appear in the Church, and a care to gsin on the Heathens, made them quickly fall upon some rites, and use some terms, which after ages corrupted. But the ruin of Religion was, when the Roman Empire being overturned by the incursion of the Northern Nations, in the beginning of the fifth Century, both piety and Religion being laid to sleep, in stead of the Primitive simplicity of the faith and worship of the Christians, they turned all their zeal to the adorning of the outwards of Religion, and hence the corruptions of the Church took their rise.

But I had almost forgot to name some Revelations which that Church pretends to, even for some of her most doubtful opinions: which are the visions and extraordinary Inspirations of some of their Saints, from which they vouch a divine confirmation to their Doctrines; I confess there is a great deal of extraordinary Visions, Raptures and Extasies to be met with among the lives of their Saints; and I fear a great

next deal more then truth : for really
whofo will but read these writings,
must confesse they are so far from
being probable, or well contrived,
that they speak out their forgery.
As / whereas St. Paul being put to
Glory, of Visions and Revelations,
was to run back fourteen years for
one. Their Saints are found in them
every day. Are they not very credible
stories they tell of Christs appear-
ing to some of their Shee-Saints, and
kissing them, giving them Rings, be-
ing married to them, and celebrat-
ing nuptial rites, making them drink
out of his side, and leaving on them
the prints of his wounds, with many
other such like apparitions of the Vir-
gin, and other Saints, which were ei-
ther forgeries, dreams, or the ef-
fects of melancholy, or hysterical dis-
tempers; and yet these extravagant
fables are given out to the people, as
sacred pieces of Divine Revelations.

But the inspiration of the holy Wri-
ters, on which we found our faith, was
proved by their miracles which they
wrought publicly in the sight of ma-
ny.

ny, and in the presence of their adversaries, many of whom were convinced by them; and it is certain, that whosoever offers any thing to anothers belief, pretending he comes to him in the Name of God, must have some evident proof of his Divine Mission: since none are bound to believe him barely on his own Testimony: Otherwise there should be no end of Impostures, if every pretender to Divine Inspiration were to be believed without proof. Now the way it must be proved, is by some evidence of Gods extraordinary assisting such a person, which appeared alwayes either in Prophecies, or Miracles, but chiefly in miracles under the New Testament: and therefore both Christ and his Apostles appeal to the mighty works they wrought, as the great confirmation of their Doctrine. If then there be new Doctrines brought in upon the Church, they must have the like confirmation, otherwise they are not to be believed.

But here those of that Church think they triumph: For miracles they have

have in abundance; not a Relique they have, but hath wrought mighty wonders, nor a Countrey-Saint, but the Curat of the place can gravely tell a great many deeds of his puissance; nor want the Images their marvellous achievements, but wondrously wondrous are the feats the Hosty hath performed: Here I am upon a sad Subject of that trade of lies and fiction, wherewith the Merchants of that Babylon have so long trafficked; of which the sincerer among themselves are ashamed. How ridiculous are many of their miraculous narrations? Was it a worthy piece of the Angelical Ministration, for Angels to go trotting over Sea and Land with a baggage of Timber and Stones of the *Virgins house*? till at length they set it down at *Loretto*, that great devotions might be shown to it. Is it a goodly story for to tell of a Saint that walked so far after his head was cut off, with it in his arms, resting in some places to draw breath? yet he will pass for an Infidel that should doubt of this, at *St. Denis*.

Church. Who can look on the lives of the late Saints of that Church, without nausea? *Gregories Dialogues* began this trade, which indeed hath thriven well since. The miracles of the Christian faith were grave and solemn actions; but what ridiculous scenical stories, not to say blasphemous ones, meet us about the miracles of their Saints? He that would know this, may read the lives of *St. Francis*, and *St. Dominic*, *S. Bridget*, and the two *St. Catherines*, and he will be satisfied to a surfeit. The miracles also of Christ and his Apostles were acted publicly, in the view of all; but most of these narrations of their wonders were transacted in corners, none being witnesses but persons concerned to owne the cheat. And the doctrine of equivocating was a good cordial for the ease of their consciences, though they swore what they knew false, according to the natural sense of the words which they uttered. Thus we have many fables of Christs appearing in the Host sometimes as a child, and sometime

as crucified, when but a very few of the whole company present, were honoured with that amazing sight.

Further, the miracles of the Christian faith were written down in the times in which they were acted, that so enquiries might have been made into their falshood; and the powers that then governed, being enemies to the faith, it was safe for its opposers, to have proved and discovered their forgery, had any such been. But many of the miracles of Rome are not heard of, till some Ages, at least years be past, whereby they are secure from the after-game of a discovery; and he were a stout man that would adventure to question the verity of these pretences at Rome, where it is the interest of that Church to have them all believed, without once questioning them. But how comes it, that in Heretical Countreys (as they call them) where there is more need of those miracles, and where they might be more irrefragably proved, if true, since the Examiners of them were not to be suspected,

yet none of these mighty works do show themselves forth? Certainly, that they are to this day so rife in Italy and Spain, and so scant in Britain, is a shrewd ground to apprehend Legerdemain, and forgery, in the accounts we get of their later Saints. And indeed the Contrivers of these Stories have not managed their design by any half, so well as need was; for they have bestowed as many of them on one person, as might have Sainted the half of an Order. But the gain that is made by new Saints, and new Reliques, is well enough known; not to speak of the general advantage that Church pretends to draw from it.

But in end though some things among them did seem to surpass the known powers of Nature, these ought not to prevail upon us for departing from the truth; since though an Angel from Heaven Preached another Gospel, he is to be accursed. Gal. 1. 8. If then they have so changed the Christian Doctrine by their Additions and Inventions, that it is become thereby as another Gospel; none of the seemingly Seraphical

he Seraphical appearances they may have
among them, though true, ought to
and reconcile us to it, and that the ra-
is other since we were expresly guarded
against this Imposture, by St. Paul,
who gave it as an Indication of the Son
of Perdition, that his coming was af-
ter the power of Satan, with all power,
by and signes, and lying wonders, and with
all deceivableness of unrighteousnesse,
1. Thess. 2. 9. 10. And it is a part of
their curse, that they are given up
to strong delusions, to beleive lies: the
Beast also that appeared to St. John
Rev. 13. 13. did great wonders, so
that he made Fire come down from
Heaven, in the sight of men, and deceiv-
ed many, that dwelt on the Earth, by
these Miracles which he had power to
do. But to conclude this, my grea-
test quarrel, at these forgeries of mi-
racles is, that the people being taught
to beleive them, and the Miracles of
the Gospel, with an equal certainty,
since they have the Testimony of the
Church for both, and they seeing
such evident Characters of fraud and
forgery on these supposed miracles,
whereby

whereby they are convinced of their falshood, are thereby in danger of suspecting all the Miracles of the Gospel, as the tricks of subdolous and crafty men; whereby they run headlong to an Atheistical disbelieving the truth of all alike. And thus far we have found how opposite that Church is, to the Spouse of Christ, since her doctrines are so ill founded and look so like cunningly devised fables, without the authority of divine inspiration, or the proof of true Miracles.

The next Character of our faith is, its perspicuity, and simplicity, all being called to the clear light of the day in it, and every part of it being so genuine that it is apparent, it was not the contrivance of designing men, that by the belief of it they might obtain the power, and possess the riches of the World: and therefore there are no secret doctrines in our faith, which must be kept up from the Vulgar, whereby the Pastors of Christendom may have dominion over their souls. But what must we conclude of them who by all means study to keep all o

their Communion ignorant, as if devotion were thereby nourished; and allow them not the use of the Scriptures in their mother-tongue, nor a worship which they can understand, whereby it is, that they who occupy the room of unlearned, cannot say Amen at the giving of thanks, since they understand not what is said. To this might be added their implicate faith, to all the doctrines of the Church, without further inquiries; and their blind obedience to the *Confessarius*, be he never so ignorant and carnal. These are certainly darkening opinions, and practises, and far different from the methods of the Apostles, in preaching the Gospel, who with-held from the People nothing of the Counsel of God, and studied the enlightening their understandings, as well as the enlivening of their wills.

But further, how much of interest appears in the Doctrines of Rome, which tend to the exalting or enriching the Papacy, and inferiour Clergy, for it is visible what a trade they drive by them, and all the contrivances, all the projectours in Europe ever fell up-
on

on for enriching their Masters Treasury, falls short of the projects of Purgatory, the Treasure of the Church, Indulgences, and the Popes absolute authority, in making, abrogating, and dispensing with all Positive Laws. Neither is there more of design to be found in the *Alcoran*, then in the mysteries of that *Caliph* of the *Spiritual Babylon*. And we may guess of their concernedness in these matters, since a gentler censure may be hoped for upon the violation of the greatest of the Laws of God, then upon the least contradiction to their idolized Interests. The one is the constant subject of their studies, and Sermons, whereas the other is seldom minded.

The third Character of our faith, is, that it is rational and suitable to our souls, God having fitted it, and framed them, so harmoniously, that they are congenial one to another. It is true, the mysteries about God and Christ are exalted above the reach of our faculties, but even reason it self teacheth that it must be so, since if there be a God, he must be infinite and incomprehensible, and therefore

It is not to be wondered at, if the Scriptures offer some mysteries to us about God and Christ, which choke and stifle the impressions we are apt to take of things. But in these, it is visible, that the Object is so disproportioned to our faculties, that it is impossible we can reach or comprehend it, but as for the other parts of Religion, they are all so distinctly plain, that the reasonableness, as well as the authority of them, serve to commend them to us, but how void are they of this, who have made one of the chief Articles of their faith, and the greatest matter of their worship, that which is, not only beyond, but contrary to, the most common impressions of Nature, which teacheth us, to believe our senses when under no lesion, and duly applied to a proper object. For indeed, in that case, we cannot really doubt but things are as they appear to us; for we cannot believe it midnight, when we clearly see the Sun in the Meridian; nay, and our faith rests on the evidences our senses give, since we believe, because miracles were clearly

clearly seen by these who first received the faith : And, *Christ said, believe me for the very works sake, Job. 14-17.* And so their sight of these works was, a certain ground for their belief, therefore the senses unvitiated, fixing on a proper object, through a due middle, are infallible ; therefore what our sight, our taste, and our touch tell us, is Bread and Wine, must be so still, and cannot be imaged to have changed its substance, upon the recital of the five words. Shall I add to this, that throng of absurdities which croud about this opinion ? for if it be true, then a body may be in more places at once, triumphing in glory in one, and sacrificed in a thousand other places : And a large body may be crowded in to the narrow space of a thin Wafer, they holding it to be not only wholly in the whole Wafer, but also entirely in every crumb of it : A body can be without dimensions and accidents without a subject ; these must be confessed to be among the heighest of unconceivables ; and yet these Miracles must be believed to be produced

roduced every day, in above a hundred thousand places. Certainly, he hath a sturdy belief who can swallow over all these absurdities, without choking on them.

It is little less unconceivable, to imagine, that a man of no eximious sanctity, (nay, perhaps of noted impiety,) nor extraordinarily knowing (nay, perhaps grossly ignorant) of Theological Matters, shall have the holy Ghost to absolutely at his command, that whatever he decrees must be the dictates of the Spirit. And what an unconceivable mystery is the Treasure of the Church, and the Popes authority to dispence it as he will? No less conceivable is the efficacy of the Sacraments, by the work wrought: nor is any thing more affronting to reason, then the barbarous worship. And of a piece with this is the blind subjection is pleaded for the *Confessaribus* his injunctions, and their opinions of expiating their sins by a company of little trifling penances, which tend not to the cleansing the soul, nor killing of the life of sin, much less can be able to

to appease God either of their own imbred worth, or by reason of any value God is pleased to set on them, either by Command, or Promise. But should I reckon up every thing is among them that choaks reason, I should dwell too long on this, & reckon over most of the things have been through the whole discourse hinted at, which seem to stand in the most diametral opposition, to the clearest impressions of all mens reasons.

But to bring my enquiry to an issue, easiness, and gentleness, are by Christ applied to his yoke, laws, and burden; and whatever opposition or trouble they may give to the carnal man, by mortifying his lusts and contradicting all his inordinat and unlimited desires, yet by the rational faculties and powers, they are both easily understood and practised. Indeed Religion lies in few things, and its chief work is, the reforming and purifying the inward man, where it mainly dwells and exerts its force, and vertue: but these who have added so much both to be believed and done, beyond what

our Lord prescribed, as they accuse his unfaithfulness, to bring unsupportable burdens on the Consciences of Christians: these therefore who lead out the mind by presenting a great many forraign objects to it, do introduce superannuated Judaism, instead of that liberty, Christ brought with him unto the World. But shall I number up here all the impositions of that Church, whose numbers are great as well as their nature grievous? for it is a study to know them all; but what a pain must it be to perform them. It is a work which will take up a great deal of time to understand the *Rubricks of their Missals, Breviaries, Rituals, and Pontificals*. In a word, they have lost the unity and simplicity of Religion, and set up instead of it, a lifelesse heap of ordinances which must oppress, but cannot relieve the Consciences of their Disciples.

Shall I add to this the severity of some of their Orders, into which, by unalterable vows, they are engaged their whole lives. Now whatever
fitness

strictness might be in such Discipline upon occasions, for beating down the body, or humbling of the mind, yet it must be very tyrannical to bind the perpetual observance of these on any by an oath, for thereby all the rest of their lives may become unsupportably bitter to them, wherein they stand obliged under perjury, to the perpetual observance of some severe Discipline, which though at first in a novitious fervour, might have had its good effects on them, yet that drying up, it will afterwards have no other effect but the constant defecting of the soul, and so their life will be a rack to them by their perpetual toil in these austerities: This I speak of those who seem the chief ornaments of that Church, whose devotion doth for most part turn to outwards, and rests in the strict observance of their rules, not without voluntary assumed mortifications, which they add to them, but wherein they for most part glory, and so the life of pride, and self-love (the subtlest of all our enemies) is fed and nourished by them: neither

Can we think that these whose exercises are so much external, can be so well recollected, for the inward and serene breathings of the mind after God and Christ, without which, all externals, though they seem to make a fair show in the flesh, yet are but a skelet of the lifeless and insipid things. But indeed they have studied to remove this objection of the uneasiness of their Religion, by accommodating it so, that the worst of men may be secure of Heaven, and enjoy their lusts both according to the corrupt conduct of some of their spiritual Fathers: But what I have hinted of the uneasiness of their Religion, is taken from the nature of their devotions, in their highest altitude and elevation.

And thus far I have pursued my design, in the tract whereof, I have not been void of a great deal of pain and sorrow; for what pleasure can any find by discovering so much wickedness, and so many errors in the Christened Regions of the World; and see the holy and beautiful places, wherein the former Ages worshipped God

God in the Spirit, turned to be
 bitations of Idols and graven Images
 by which God is provoked to jealousy
 lie. God is my witness, how the
 thoughts have entertained me with
 horror and regret, all the while I
 have considered them: and that I
 am so far from being glad, that I have
 found so much corruption in the Ro-
 man Church, that it is not without
 the greatest antipathy to my nature
 imaginable, that I have payed this de-
 lity to truth, by asserting it with the
 discovery of so many impostures, which
 have so long abused the Christian
 World; and if any heat or warmth
 hath slipped from my Pen, I must pro-
 test sincerely, it is not the effect of
 anger, or passion, but of a tender
 zealous compassion, for these souls
 who are either already blinded with
 these delusions, or do incline toward
 those paths which lead to the chamber
 of death.

I am none of those who justify rage
 or bitterness against these in error
 for if we had the Spirit of Christ
 us, we should mourn over, and

ment their misery, wholly under so much darkness. And this is a safe character to judge if our zeal for God and his truth be divine and Evangelical, if it make us pour out Rivers of tears for those that have gone out of the way, rather than streams of fire against them. That zeal which raiseth melting sorrow, tender compassion, and fervent prayers for these we see erring, is Christ-like, and worthy of that meek and charitable spirit, which the Gospel himself so much recommends: whereas that zeal which boils out in rage and foam against such as err, and designs their ruin, and mischief, and studies how to persecute, rather than convert them, and kindles in men bitter opposition to their persons, together with rude harshness in their behaviour to them, is all Antichristian and carnal. My design therefore in this discourse is to provoke piety rather than wrath, and tears more than flames, towards those deceived and deluded multitudes, that we

may pray for them, rather then
at them.

But my chief aim is to perswade
all who love their souls, to con-
sider the danger of continuing in the
Communion of a Church, that hath
not only fallen from her first love
and purity, but hath in so many
great and essential points corrupted
our most holy faith, and adultera-
ted the pure sincerity of our wor-
ship.

I shall not here search into the
depths of the mercies of God, how
far they may reach any of that Com-
munion, nor examine how far they
hold the foundation Christ, notwith-
standing of all the base superstru-
ctures they have reared upon it; nor
shall I consider how far invincible ig-
norance may excuse the guilt of an
error, nor how applicable this may
be to them, nor shall I discuss how
far the privat differing from these
errors may in many things secure
some of the individuals of that
Communion from the general guilt

lies

lies over them ; upon all these particulars many things may be said, and none alive is more willing to stretch his invention, for finding out grounds to fix his charity on, than my self. But all I can devise falls short of any excuse for those who being educated in the knowledge of the truth and sincerity of the Gospel, do fall away into the errors and superstitions of that Church; nor can I imagine what their temptations should be to it, except one of two : The first is, that they desire a sensible Religion, and therefore loath the simplicity and spirituality of the Gospel, and love to have some glorious objects in Worship to strike on, and affect their senses : but however this may make impressions on the grosser rabble, yet certainly, any that considers that the perfection of man lies in his reason, and not in his outward senses, and that the exaltation of reason is Religion ; he must confess that the less it dwell in the senses, and the

more inward it become on the reason, it is the more suitable both to the nature of God, of Religion, and of the rational faculties. But the other consideration that may draw many to that Religion, is yet worse, which is, because in it a great allowance is given to all manner of sin, by the treacherous conduct of Confessors, who perswade men of Heaven, on terms very easie and pleasing to flesh and blood. And hence it is that we see very few who have expressed any affection to a devout life, abandoning us to go over to the *Roman Communion*, most of those who do so, being as void of vertue, as ignorant of the nature of true Religion; that we may say, *Job. 2. 19. They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they had not gone out from us.*

These being the only visible tentations to entice any from our Communion to theirs, it is hard to preserve any degrees of charity for them :

them: for a third tentation being that only which can work on a devout mind, takes with so few among us, that I need scarce name it, which is the solitary and retired houses among them for leading a devout and strict life. This I know wrought mightily on one, and made him many times wish that he could with a good Conscience throw himself into one of these Religious houses; but the consideration of these great corruptions lay so in his way, that without the doing the greatest force on his conscience imaginable, and thereby securing damnation to himself by complying with things he judged so damnable, he durst not do it. Yet for his further satisfaction, he went among them, to see if their worship appeared more amiable in practise, then it did in writings; but I have heard him often declare, that though his mind was as free of prepossessions, as perhaps ever mans was, yet all he conceived of them, even from the Writings of their

adversaries, was nothing compared to the impressions which the sight of their worship left upon him, it appearing so histrionical in all its circumstances, and so idolatrous in its substance, especially as he saw the vulgar practise it. And for their Religious Houses, he was among a great many of all Orders, but was far from meeting with that spirit of devotion, he had hoped to find among them, for they alwayes magnified their Order, and the little external austerities and devotions of it, but for genuine humility, a delight in God, and Christ, abstraction from the world, (for all their frocks and retirements,) sincere heavenly-mindedness, and fervent charity to the Brethren, he regrated he had met with little of it among them. And that he found the several Orders full of emulation and envy at other Orders, and of actions and heats among themselves, which made him see, that he who meant to lead a deyout life, must choose
another

another Sanctuary then any of these
he saw in that Communion.

I deny not that it is the greatest
defect of the reformation, that there
are not in it such encouragements
to a devout life: though the intangle-
ments of vows to things without
our power, is a manifest invasion of
the Christian liberty; and to languish
out ones life in a tract of lasie devo-
tion, without studying to serve God
in our generation, seems contrary to
the intendment of Religion, a great
many of its precepts being about
these duties we owe our neighbours.
yet for all this, it is not to be de-
nied to be a great defect that we
want reclus houses, for a stricter
training up of those who design to
lead a spiritual life, and to serve in
the Gospel, that their minds being
rightly formed before their first
setting out, they may be well quali-
fied and furnished for their work.
Such houses might also be retreat-
ing places for old persons, after they
had served their generation, and
were no more able to undergo toil

and fatigue, they might be able to
Sanctuaries for devout persons, in
any times of their greater afflictions
or devotions. But for all this
want, it fixeth no imputation on our
Church, her Doctrine, or Worship,
that she is so poor as not to be able
to maintain such Seminaries. But
on the way, it is no great Character
of the piety of their Church, that
she abounds so with great and rich
dotations, when we consider the
Arts they used for acquiring them
by making people believe them-
selves secure of Heaven by such do-
nations: Indeed, had we got our
people besotted into such perswa-
sions, the cheat might have prosper-
ed as well in our hands, but we are
not of those, who handle the Word of
God deceitfully, 2 Cor. 4. 2. Nor
will we draw the people even to do
good with a crafty guile, or lie for
God.

But now, as a conclusion to this
discourse, I must consider, if all
things among us be so sound and
well

well grounded, that with a quiet mind and good Conscience every one may hold communion with our Church, and hope for Salvation in it, I shall therefore briefly, run over the nature and Characters of the Christian faith, to see if any contradiction to them, or any part of them, be found among us. And first of all, we worship God in spirit, as a spiritual being, with suitable adorations, which we direct to no Image, nor Symbole of the Divine Presence, but teach, that we ought not to figure God to any corporeal being, no not in our thoughts; neither do we worship any, beside God the Father, Son and Spirit. We also worship Christ, but as he is God, and hath the fulness of the God-head dwelling in him bodily. Angels indeed we honour, but knowing them to be our fellow servants, we cannot pray to them, or fall down before them; we count the holy Virgin blessed among women, but dare give her no share of the

154 *The Mystery of*

glory due to her Son, all the Saints we reverence and love, but knowing God to be a *jealous God*, we cannot divide that honour among them, which is only due to him; and therefore do neither worship them, their Images, nor their Reliques. We desire also to offer up to God such sacrifices as we know are well-pleasing to him; Prayers, Praises, broken and contrite hearts, and our souls, and bodies, but reject all charms and enchantments from our worship, as contrary to the *reasonable service*, which is acceptable to God, and do retain the genuine simplicity of the Gospel-worship, in a plain and intelligible stile and form, without any mixtures drawn from Judaism or Gentilism; and thus there is nothing among us contrary to the first design of Religion.

And as little will be found against the second, which is the honour due to Christ in all his Offices; we teach our people to study the Scriptures, and

and to examine all we say by them, and exhort them to depend on God, who by his Spirit will teach them as well as us: neither do we pretend to an authority over their Consciences, but acknowledge our selves men of like infirmities with the people, who are all called to be a Royal Priest-hood, and thus we honour Christs Prophetical Office, by founding our faith only on the divine authority of the Scriptures. We also believe, there is no name given under heaven by which we can be saved, but the Name of Christ, who laid down his life a ransom for our souls, that by his Cross, we might be reconciled to God; and it is to that one sacrifice, that we teach all to fly for obtaining remission of sins, and the favour of God, trusting only to it, and to nothing we have done, or can do; knowing that when we have done all we can do, we are but unprofitable servants; much less do we hope for any thing from any of our fellow-creatures, we apply /

ply our souls to no Intercessour but Christ, and trust to no satisfaction but his, and we acknowledge him the only King of his Church, whose Laws must bind it to the end of the World. Neither do we acknowledge any other authority, but his over our Consciences. It is true, in things indifferent, he hath left a power with his Church to determine in those matters, which may tend to advance order, edification, peace, and decency; but as the Church cannot add to our faith, so neither can it institute new peeces of worship, which shall commend us to God, or bind any load upon our souls. We own a ministerial authority in all the Pastors of the Church, which they derive from Jesus Christ, and not from any visible head on earth, and therefore they are only subject to Christ. We also hold, that the civil powers are of Christ, whose Gospel binds the duty of obedience to them more closely on us, and therefore if they do

do wrong, we leave them to Christ's Tribunal, who set them up, but pretend to no power from his Gospel to coerce or resist them ; and thus we honour Christ in all his Offices, and so are conform to the second branch of the design of our faith.

We also receive the third with the same fidelity, and whatever the practices of too too many among us be, yet there is no ground to quarrel our doctrine ; we preach repentance to all, and study to convince them of their misery, and lost estate, that they may mourn for their sins, and turn to God by a new course of life ; we preach faith through Christ in God, as that which unites our souls to him, by which we are in Christ, and Christ is in us. We stir up our people to love the Lord their God with all their heart, strength, soul, and mind, and to wait for his Son Christ Jesus, who is the hope of glory and shall change our vile bodies into the likeness of his

his glorious body. And from this great motive do we press our people to the study of holiness, without which they shall never see God. We send them to the ten Commandments for the rule of their lives, whose exposition we chiefly take from Christs Sermon on the mount, neither can we be charged for having taught the People, to break one of the least of these Commandments. We exhort all our hearers to make the life of Christ the pattern of theirs, and to learn of him who was meek and lowly in heart; neither can our Church be accused of having taught any Carnal Doctrines, for gratifying the base Interests of the flesh, or for enhancing of riches, or ingrossing the power of the World, the subsistence of our Church men, being but a lively-hood, and not a treasure. In a word, we preach Christ, and him crucified, and all the rules of his Gospel, for ordering the conversation aright, without ad-
ding.

ding, or taking from it; and thus our conformity to the third branch of Christianity appears.

We teach also according to the fourth branch of Christianity, the Doctrines of Charity, neither do we condemn any who holds the foundation, though in some lesser matter they differ from us; but hope they may be saved as well as wee. We abhor the Doctrine of cruel persecuting of any for their Consciences; the utmost we allow of, or desire of that nature, being the preservation of our own Societies, pure from the contagion of other Traffiquers, and the driving from us those who do so disturb us. All the authority we give the Church, is paternal, and not tyrannical, our Church-men we hold to be the Pastors, but not the Lords of the flock, who are obliged to feed them sincerely, both by their Doctrine, Labours, and the whole Conversation; but we pretend to no blind obedience due to their

their directions, and count them Noble Christians, who search and try all they say by that Test of the Scriptures: we send the People to confess their sins to God, from whom only we teach them to expect their pardon, and pretend to no other keyes, but Ministerial ones, over publick and known Scandals. In our worship, as all do understand it, so every one may joyn in it. And in the number, use, and simplicity of our Sacraments, we have religiously adhered to the rules of the Gospel, we holding them to be solemn federal Rites of our Stipulation with God, in which if we do worthily partake of them, we are assured of the presence of the Divine Spirit and Grace, for uniting our Souls more intirly to God, and advancing us in all the wayes of the Spirit of life: and if the institution of them in the Gospel, be compared with our Administration of them, it will appear how close we have kept to our rule.

And

And thus we see how exactly conform the Doctrine of our Church is, to the whole branches of the Christian design. Upon which it is not to be doubted, but the characters of the Christian Religion, will also fit ours; we found our faith only on the Scriptures, and though we pay a great deal of venerable esteem to the Churches of God during their purity, which continued above four Centuries, and so be very willing to be determined in Rituals, and Matters that are external and indifferent, by their opinions and practices; yet our faith settles only on the word of God, and not on the traditions of men, neither do we believe every Spirit that pretends to rapt & visions, but try the Spirits, whether they be of God, or not: and though an *Angel should preach to us another Gospel, we would hold him accursed.* The miracles we trust to as the Proofs of the truth of that Revelation which we believe, are only those contained in the
Scrip-

Scriptures : and though we believe there was a wonder-working power continued for some time in the Church, yet we make a great difference betwixt what we historically credit, and what we religiously believe : neither will we for supporting our Interest or authority, have recourse to that base trade of forging lying Wonders ; but we rest satisfied with the miracles Christ and his Apostles, wrought for the proof of the Religion we own : since what we believe, is no other then what they taught, and therefore we leave the Trade of forging new miracles, to them who have forged a new Religion.

And for the plain genuines of the Gospel, we have not departed a step from it, since we call upon our People by all the motives we can devise, & with all the earnestness we are Masters of, to receive full and clear Instruction in all the matters of Religion, which we distinctly lay open to them. And nothing of Interest or

design can be charged on us, who pretend to nothing but to be the stewards of the Mysteries of God; nor have we offered to sophisticat the simplicity of our worship, by any additions to it; for the determining about some particular forms, is no addition to worship, but only the following forth of these Precepts of doing all things to edification, peace and order. But an addition to worship is when any new peece of divine service is invented with a pretence that our being more acceptable to God thereby, or of our receiving grace by that conveyance, and therefore any Rites we have, as they are not without some hints from Scripture, so we pretend not to become any way acceptable to God by them.

Further, we teach no irrational or unconceivable Doctrine: It is true there are Mysteries in our faith, but even reason teacheth that these must be unconceivable; but for all other perswasions they are such,

as may be well made out to the rational faculties of man; therefore we do not betake our selves to that sanctuary, that we must be believed, assert what we please; but we assert nothing but what we offer to evince by the clearest proofs. And in fine, we add nothing to the burdensomeness of the lawes of Christ, but teach and propose them as we have them from his Gospel, without adding, changing, or altering, a Title from the first Institution.

And so far have I considered the Doctrine and worship of our Church wherein if I could justify all our *Practices*, as well as I can do our *Principles*, there were no ground to fear much from all the Cavills of Mortals. But for bad Practices, whatsoever matter of regrave they may furnish us with, they afford none for separation: therefore, there is no ground that can justify a separation from our Church, much less warrand the turning over from us to the Communion of Rome: and thus far have I pursued

ed my designed Enquiry, which was;
if with a safe Conscience any might
adjoin themselves to the Popish
Religion, or if Communion with
our Church was to be kept and con-
tinued in; and have found great
Grounds to assert the evident haz-
ards of the former, so that no man
to whom his salvation and welfare is
dear, can, or ought to join himself
to that Idolatrous and Antichristian
Church; but on the other hand,
without renting the Body of Christ,
none can, or ought to depart from
our Churches; but I leave the per-
sonal and considering of these things
to the serious Reader, to whom I
hope they may give some satisfac-
tion, if he bring with him to the En-
quiry an attentive serious, and unbi-
assed mind. And I leave the suc-
cess of this, and every other attempt
of this Nature, for the clearing of
Divine truth, with him who is the
only fountain of blessings, who is
over all, God blessed for evermore,
Amen.

F I N I S